THE

APOLOGY OF ORIGEN

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IN REPLY TO CELSUS

A CHAPTER IN

THE HISTORY OF APOLOGETICS

BY

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TO

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PREFACE.

The aim of this monograph is indicated by its title. Its primary object is to give an exposition of the principles and details of the apology of Origen; but for that end it has been deemed advisable to give a full account of the work which he sought to refute, as well as to discuss the problems connected therewith. The analysis of the 'True Word' is the result of an independent study of the fragments preserved by Origen; but I have tested my own conclusions by reference to all the relative literature to which I had access, notably to the works of Keim, Aubé, and Pelagaud. It has been too much the custom of Church historians (with some conspicuous exceptions such as Baur) to

disparage the work of Celsus as a contemptible tissue of sophistry and slander: to what extent this is a true representation, every reader of this book may judge for himself. According to the view here presented, the key to the philosophical and religious position of Celsus may be found in the similarity of his attack to that of Julian. Both revered the same theological master, both held the same theory of the national religions, the same philosophy of polytheism; and, as a consequence, both adopted the same attitude towards Christianity. Celsus was not the first of the Greek thinkers who believed, or professed to believe, in the reconciliation of philosophical theism with the worship of the gods of the people; but he was the first who had, at the same time, a competent knowledge of Christianity, and saw clearly that between that view and Christianity no compromise was possible. In this consists the importance of Celsus in the history of religious thought.

The work, it may be added, was almost wholly written before the publication of Hatch's

'Hibbert Lecture'; but indirectly it may serve to throw some light on the question raised in that fascinating book.

I desire to acknowledge my obligations to the Rev. William Patrick, B.D., Kirkintilloch, and the Rev. George Gardiner, B.D., Kirknewton, who have read the proofs and made many valuable suggestions.

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PART I.

THE ATTACK OF CELSUS

THE ATTACK OF CELSUS.

CHAPTER I.

THE 'TRUE WORD'—ITS DATE AND AUTHORSHIP.

THE 'True Word'[1] of Celsus marks an important stage in the development of the conflict between Hellenism and Christianity. The vague monstrous charges against which the earlier apologists had to contend were no longer heard, or were repeated only by superficial observers who echoed the cry of ignorant fanaticism. With the attack of Celsus the distinctive tenets of the Christian system are seen to be clearly apprehended by a vigorous and subtle repre-

[1] Origen calls it indifferently λόγος ἀληθής (Pref., c. 4) and ἀληθὴς λόγος (ii. 1 ; iii. 1 ; iv. 62 ; viii. 76). The latter form is adopted by the latest editor, Koetschau, in his Prolegomena to a critical edition which has not yet appeared (Leipzig, 1889 : Pref., p. iv). I have used the editions of Spencer (Cambridge, 1658) and Lommatzsch, vols. xviii.-xx. (Berlin, 1845-46).

sentative of Greek philosophy. Herein lies the unique significance of his work. That he has sometimes confused what we deem to be catholic truth with the vagaries of Gnostic speculation, that he has misinterpreted the details of some dogmas, is true; but, on the whole, he has an accurate conception of the great essentials of Christianity, its distinctive position and claims. Even from a purely historical or literary point of view, few records are more interesting than this survival of an ancient yet ever-recurring conflict: to the student of apologetics it is of the deepest import. The very fact of such an attack, apart altogether from its force, is an index of the progress of the Gospel. It is to the credit of Celsus that he was the first to recognise that the time for silence and contempt had passed, and that the new faith was not to be put in the same rank with the numberless claimants on the credulity of the populace, but was a phenomenal force demanding serious inquiry. The method of attack has determined the character of the defence, and some sections of both have become antiquated, but in its leading ideas the work of Celsus might have been written yesterday; and though every apologetic treatise takes its form and colour from the age in which it was written, and the circumstances which called it forth, our analysis and presentation in systematic form of the defence of Origen will be defective if it does not show that the

great and vital principles in Christian Apologetics were clearly formulated and developed by him.

The value and interest of the work depend in great measure on the date to which it can be definitely or probably assigned. An early inquirer,[1] with singular blindness, ascribed it to the age of Nero; a recent writer,[2] influenced by a dogmatic bias fatal to historical insight, holds that Celsus was a contemporary of Origen, and that his book was written about 240. With one exception, all the statements of Origen concerning him are given as from hearsay, or are purely hypothetical. That exception is the statement that he was dead long ago.[3] We must therefore turn to the work itself, as we find it embedded in the reply of Origen. There we find indications somewhat indefinite, yet sufficient to establish a reasonable probability that the work was written between 169 and 176, when Marcus Aurelius was sole ruler, or between 176 and 180, when the empire was under the joint sway of Marcus Aurelius and Commodus.[4]

The position of the Church, both in its internal and external relations, seems to point to that period.

[1] P. Faydit, 1695.

[2] Volkmar—Der Ursprung unserer Evangelien, pp. 80, 164, 165.

[3] ἤδη καὶ πάλαι νεκροῦ—Pref., c. 4.

[4] No satisfactory argument can be based on the coincidences between Celsus and Minucius Felix, as the date of the latter and his relation to Tertullian are matters of keen controversy. For an interesting *résumé* of the relative literature, see an article by Massebieau, 'Revue de l'Histoire des Religions,' vol. xv. p. 316.

Gnostic teaching is in full vigour. Marcionitism is a living force.[1] Celsus speaks of a body which, because of its relative greatness or authority, he calls the "Great Church,"[2] and yet refers to the teaching of the Ophites as Christian.[3] Origen supposes that this was done by Celsus in ill faith, but in this he erred. We may therefore think of a time when the essentially unchristian character of the source of their teaching had not yet been formally recognised. The reference to the tenets of various obscure heretical sects which had escaped the search of Origen tends to throw back the date to a period immediately subsequent to their first promulgation. In speaking of such as illustrating the tendency to continuous schisms in the Church, Celsus makes mention of the followers of Marcellina,[4] who, according to Irenæus,[5] came to Rome in the episcopate of Anicetus. From such indications it is clear that the 'True Word' cannot have been written before 170. Against this in favour of an earlier date has been urged the allusion to Antinous, who was drowned in 130, it being deemed impossible that the worship of that favourite of Hadrian could long survive the emperor himself. But it is evident from the medals and inscriptions,

[1] vi. 51-53, 74, 29.

[2] *τῶν ἀπὸ μεγάλης ἐκκλησίας τοῦτο δμολογούντων*—v. 59.

[3] vii. 40. [4] v. 62.

[5] Iren. con. Hæres., i. 25, 6. Anicetus was bishop, 155-165 (Lightfoot's Clement, vol. i. p. 327).

and even from the words of Origen, that the worship of Antinous had not ceased by the middle of the third century.[1]

This view is confirmed by a consideration of the relation of the Church to the empire. It was a time of persecution.[2] Keim may be in error in holding that there is convincing evidence of a general persecution; but the conditions are not satisfied by the theory of a few sporadic cases. The view that the passages quoted only express a pious wish on the part of a bitter enemy is grotesque.[3] The endeavour to propitiate the Christians at the close, unless it be regarded as ironical, is adverse to the supposition of a general persecution; or it may be an indication that it had begun to decline, or had lasted long enough to prove to an acute observer its futility as a method of suppressing Christianity.

When the work was written, the barbarians were threatening the stability of the empire.[4] The language suggests a measure of alarm greater than was likely to be created by the first threatened onset, but which would be natural in view of former experience.

[1] In Dietrichson's monograph on "Antinoos" ample proof may be found. He quotes inscriptions (p. 327) of dates from 180-183, and shows that games were celebrated in his honour down at least to 221 (p. 331). Cf. iii. 36.

[2] i. 3; ii. 45; viii. 39, 49, 69.

[3] Jachmann—De Celso Philosopho (1836). Pelagaud—Étude sur Celse, p. 201.

[4] viii. 68.

We are therefore not to think of the collision with the Marcomanni in 166, but of a later attack which, in the judgment of one well qualified to read the signs of the times, was near at hand. The conditions seem adapted to some date between the defeat of Avidius Cassius in 175, and the disasters that befell the empire at the hands of the Parthians and Marcomanni in 178.

Celsus, if Origen quotes accurately, speaks now of one ruler, now of more than one.[1] By most writers it has been assumed that the phrase "the present rulers" points to a joint sovereignty. It is doubtful whether the phrase necessarily refers to the chief rulers, and not generally to persons in authority. When enforcing the duty of loyalty, especially in view of the irruptions of the barbarians, he speaks of the danger of the king being left alone. Would a writer have dared to speak of one when two were reigning? or to speak of two when there was but one sovereign? The probabilities are in favour of the view of a single ruler. Accustomed to joint rulers for a long series of years, the writer is more likely to have made a slip when he spoke of more than one than when he spoke of one. Perhaps we may find a solution by fixing on the transition period when the Emperor Aurelius was sole ruler, and the assumption of a colleague was on the eve of being accomplished.

[1] ὁ βασιλεῦς—viii. 68, 73. οἱ νῦν βασιλεύοντες—viii. 71.

In that case the 'True Word' probably appeared in 176.

In regard to the place of composition, the strength of the imperial instinct everywhere revealed, the type of Jew personified, the aristocratic tone, the spirit of his environment, above all, the knowledge of heresies of Western origin, of which, with all his love of knowledge and desire to know all heresies, Origen had never heard,[1] all seem to point to Rome.

Of the writer himself we know little. Celsus was a common name.[2] Our Celsus had visited Phœnicia, Palestine, and Egypt, and may have been in Persia. He obviously belonged to the class of which Plutarch speaks, who visited foreign countries not to do business, but to gather materials for theological studies.[3] And there our positive knowledge ends. Accepting the suggestion of Origen that he was an Epicurean, many writers have sought to identify him with that friend of Lucian to whom the 'Pseudomantis' was dedicated. The theory has been elaborated by Keim with great industry and subtlety.[4] He succeeds in proving that Origen was thinking of that Celsus, but

[1] v. 62.

[2] Spencer, Annot., 2, 3; Keim, Celsus' Wahres Wort., p. 276; Pelagaud, pp. 152-154.

[3] Plutarch's description of Cleombrotus might pass for a portrait of Celsus: *φιλοθεάμων καὶ φιλομαθὴς . . . καὶ συνῆγεν ἱστορίαν οἷον ὕλην φιλοσοφίας θεολογίαν . . . τέλος ἐχούσης.*—Plutarch, De Orac. Defectu (Reiske, vii. 613).

[4] *Op. cit.*, p. 275 *et seq.*

that is all. For the evidence of Origen in this matter is of little value. The treatise had been sent to him by Ambrose, who desired him to reply to it.[1] Origen had heard that there were two persons of the name of Celsus—"both Epicureans, the one of an earlier date in the time of Nero, the other in the time of Hadrian or later."[2] But the teaching of the book is at variance with this assumption, and the fact puzzles him greatly. He seizes on every point that can be construed as showing any affinity to Epicureanism, not solely for the purpose of discrediting the criticism of Celsus, but partly to satisfy himself in regard to a perplexing problem. That Celsus was a great admirer of Plato, that in many things he spoke as a Platonist, that he quoted Plato as an authority whether he agreed with him or not, Origen plainly saw and admitted.[3] And on several occasions his own arguments are of no validity unless on the assumption that his opponent was a Platonist, and a believer in Providence. In perplexity he suggests the true solution. "He has studiously kept back his Epicurean views, or, as some one might say, had afterwards changed to a better system, or, as another might say, had only the same name as the Epicurean."[4] The last seems the true view. The arguments in favour of the identification of the author of the 'True Word'

[1] Pref. 4 and 1; viii. 76. [2] i. 8.
[3] vi. 47; iv. 83; i. 32. [4] iv. 54. Cf. i. 8; iii. 22, 35, 80; v. 8.

with the friend of Lucian are briefly these: They were contemporaries, they visited the same countries, they both wrote on magic, they possessed the same temperament and intellectual characteristics. That they were contemporaries, and visited the same countries, is true; but nothing else is established.[1] It is a mistake to transform the mere hypothesis of Origen into a direct affirmation. Celsus, the friend of Lucian, wrote a work on magic, about whose beauty and utility Lucian speaks highly.[2] Origen had heard of this, and finding an inconsistency between the position adopted in that work and that assumed in his attack on Christianity, attributed it to the unscrupulous character of a bitter controversialist. "See here how he seems to admit the existence of magic! I do not know if he be the same who has written books against magic."[3] But, apart from any other consideration, a writer like Celsus, vain of his universal culture and impatient of second-hand knowledge, would certainly have alluded to his own studies on that subject, and would not have fortified his own conclusions by referring to the views of some physician whom he had met with in the course of his travels.[4] The

[1] Much stress has been put by Keim (pp. 290, 291) and Aubé ('La Polemique Païenne à la Fin du II^e^ Siècle,' p. 172) on the parallel passage about the Egyptian temples found in Lucian (Imagines, c. 11): cf. iii. 17. But nothing can be based on a metaphor so natural. It is also used by Clement (Paid., iii. c. 2, s. 4, Dindorf).

[2] Pseudomantis, c. 25.

[3] i. 68. Cf. i. 8.

[4] vi. 41. Cf. i. 26, 28, 36, 38; viii. 58, &c.

closing chapter of the 'Pseudomantis' contains the crucial passage on the point in controversy.[1] "I have deemed it fitting," says Lucian, "to write these things, to show my goodwill to a dear comrade, whom I hold in honour above all men for his wisdom and love of truth, his gentle manners, his moderation, his tranquillity of life, and courteous intercourse with others; and, further, as a work pleasing to thee, to defend Epicurus as a man truly holy and divine in nature, who alone knew beauty along with truth, and is the liberator of those who wait on his teaching." Keim, followed by Aubé,[2] sees in this passage convincing evidence for the identification of the two, and declares that one must be almost blind who does not see in this description of Lucian's friend the very portrait of the author of the 'True Word.' Many a bitter controversialist has been gentle outside the sphere of controversy, but the whole tone of the work of Celsus indicates an impassioned spirit strong in his love and keen in his hate. That Lucian and Celsus were both men of large tolerance who might have retained their friendship, however widely they differed in their theological views, is nothing to the point, for the words of Lucian assume that their views were identical. Epicurus is described as one "who had seen into the nature of things and alone knew the truth in them."[3]

[1] C. 61. [2] Keim, p. 287. Aubé, p. 168. [3] Pseudo., c. 25.

Celsus never mentions his name. He would never have assented to the estimate of him which he is assumed to support. In the eyes of Lucian, Epicurus is an emancipator. A thinker, who, though in one point of view an agnostic, is yet a believer in Providence, who would not have men offend against God even in thought, who professes to believe in the immortality of the soul, and to be adverse to any teaching which weakens faith in a future state of reward and punishment, is clearly no disciple of the emancipator. The only passage of a distinctively Epicurean tone is the striking chapter in which he scoffs at the Christian conception of God's special interest in man, by maintaining that the animals are in some respects more divine than man, and in all respects equal to him. But the motive there is mainly controversial, and on the ground of such teaching Celsus is no more to be held an Epicurean than Arnobius,[1] who from apologetic motives goes even further than he in degrading man. It is altogether wide of the mark to adduce the scurrilous nature of some of the details of the attack on Christianity, as a testimony that he could not have belonged to the grave and dignified school of the Platonists;[2] for, to say nothing of the fact that the most abusive sections are put into the

[1] Adv. Gentes, ii. 16.

[2] As Philippi—'De Celsi . . . philosophandi genere'—who, however, fully acknowledges Celsus's obligations to Plato.

mouth of a Jew, and are a true representation of the Jewish slanders of Christianity, Celsus throughout his work is above all things an assailant, and does not hesitate to bring forward arguments mutually destructive. The school to which he belonged cannot be gathered from the details, but from the principles which underlie them, and from his own positive teaching. No one can read the work itself and suppose that the writer is an Epicurean. He is too independent to belong to any school, and had a system of his own which he proposed to elaborate,[1] but the ground-tone is essentially Platonic. In this respect, Celsus does not stand alone. The attack of Julian is in most respects similar to his.[2] He is the intellectual descendant of Celsus, and from his school we may learn the type of his progenitor. The author of the 'True Word' could not have been of the same school as the friend of Lucian, for there could be no intellectual sympathy between Lucian and him. Lucian saw that philosophy by its interpretation of the national religions had destroyed them irrecoverably; Celsus believed in the possibility of a *modus vivendi*. Celsus had great reverence for the past and abhorred novelty; Lucian revelled in sheer intellectual wantonness, and

[1] viii. 76.

[2] See notes to chap. ii. *passim*. It is singular that Keim, while pointing out the influence of Celsus on Hierocles and Porphyry (pp. 258, 259), has not noted the close connection between Celsus and Julian.

applied the scalping-knife with equal relish and keenness to the gods of Greece, the speculations of philosophers, and the new cults, grotesque or monstrous. That diversity of national religions which Celsus held to be divinely ordered, is in the judgment of Lucian a proof that there is no sound basis for a theology at all.[1] In a word, the identification can only be maintained on the supposition of Origen, that he renounced Epicureanism and became a Platonist; or Origen's charge of wilful suppression of his opinions must be sustained, and in attacking Christianity from the standpoint of Platonism he was only acting a part, just as when he assumed the mask of a Jew or seemed to acknowledge magic. But of this there is no indication, and there was no advantage in it, nor necessity for it. The work of Celsus is so valuable just because it is the work of a Platonist. An antagonist like Lucian, who regards Christianity as only one of the many manifestations of religious folly, is of less interest in the development of Christian thought than one who, if not a consummate hypocrite, was a man of deeply religious temperament, and was opposed to Christianity alike on the grounds of patriotism, religion, and philosophy.

Whatever obscurity may attach to our knowledge of the man and his age, our knowledge of the work itself is clear and definite. Origen not only makes

[1] Zeus Trag., c. 42.

large quotations from it, but he quotes as a rule in order, and tells us when he alters the order.[1] To accuse him of mutilation or suppression is ridiculous.[2] With the speculations or digressions of Celsus on questions which had no direct reference to Christianity he was not concerned; his only aim was to render innocuous the poisonous shafts, so that by them the weak in faith might not be wounded. Hence some sections of the positive teaching may be imperfect, but no part of his attack on Christianity is lost. Origen expresses again and again his determination to leave no statement untested, even those which seem childish.[3] To what extent the occasional want of connection may be due to Origen or Celsus it is difficult to say. Origen, who had the 'True Word' before him, frequently alludes to its want of order, which he attributes to passion and hatred.[4] But though Celsus was an enemy, he was a skilful enemy, and marshalled his arguments in the manner best fitted for his end. He marred the unity of his work by sacrificing everything to effectiveness. He cannot be freed from the charge of repetition; but, apart from his peculiar dislike of certain Christian dogmas which are always crossing his vision, this was a necessary consequence

[1] v. 34.

[2] As Aubé and Pelagaud.

[3] v. 28; ii. 20; iv. 18; v. 53, &c. Cyril (c. Jul., ii. 38 D), on the contrary, omits some of the charges of Julian as being too blasphemous.

[4] *συγκεχυμένως εἰρημένα δία ὅλης τῆς βίβλου*—i. 40.

of the method of attack which he adopted. To attack Christ and Christianity in the person of a Jew was a masterstroke of policy; but it was impossible for Celsus to make this attack in two sections, and afterwards, from his own philosophical position, to assail Christianity, without repetition and some disorder. As the reply of Origen bears directly on the attack, its significance can only be fully understood after a detailed account of the work of Celsus. The following analysis is the result of a careful study of the passages quoted or only obscurely suggested by Origen: an endeavour has been made to supply connecting links where they seemed necessary; and the aim of the writer has been to retain, so far as that was possible in an analysis, somewhat of the tone as well as the substance of the 'True Word.'

CHAPTER II.

ANALYSIS OF THE 'TRUE WORD.'

Any division of the work of Celsus into books is more or less arbitrary. The reply of Origen is divided into eight books; but this division proceeded on the simple principle of securing a measure of uniformity in the length of the various books, and had no reference to any such divisions in the 'True Word.'[1] The work is formed of two unequal parts. The first part contains the Preface and the attack on Christ in the person of a Jew;[2] the second part contains the objections brought forward by Celsus in his own person.[3] Two indications only are given by Origen in regard to the arrangement of this second section. From iii. 1-v. 65 we can find no suggestion in Origen bearing on the division adopted by Celsus: this section is directed chiefly against the Incarnation. At v. 65[4] he enters on an

[1] vii. 70; iii. 81; vi. 81. [2] *τὸ προοίμιον αὐτοῦ καὶ ἑξῆς*—iii 1.
[3] *ὡς ἀπὸ ἰδίου προσώπου*—iii. 1.
[4] *ἐξετάζωμεν τὸν λόγον· πρότερον δὲ ὅσα*—v. 65.

examination of the Christian dogmas as contrasted with philosophy; at vii. 62[1] he "passes to another point"—to the defence of polytheism, partly on religious, partly on political grounds. The plan of his book may be represented in rough outline as follows; but it is to be noted that these are only the ruling ideas in each division, and that the same thoughts are often repeated and found in all. *Part I.*—I. The Preface (i. 1-27); II. Attack by the Jew (*a*) on Christ Himself (i. 27-i. 71); (*b*) on Jewish Christians (ii. 1-ii. 79). *Part II.*—I. The Incarnation and cognate questions (iii. 1-v. 65); II. Contrast between Christianity and philosophy (v. 65-vii. 62); III. Defence of philosophical polytheism (vii. 62-viii. 76).[2]

Part I.

Christian associations are secret, and contrary to law.[3] Christianity depends on Judaism, which is a barbarian system of doctrine. Barbarians deserve

[1] Στέον δ' ἐκεῖθεν—vii. 62.

[2] Keim divides the second part thus: 1. Refutation from the standpoint of philosophy (iii. 1-v. 65). 2. Refutation of particular doctrines from the standpoint of the history of philosophy (v. 65-vii. 62). 3. Attempts to convert and reconcile the Christians (vii. 62-end). Aubé divides thus: 1. Objections to the appearance of God in the world, and polemic against the puerile legends of the Jews (iii. 1-v. 41). 2. Objections to the Christian sect—its ethics and theology (v. 41-vii. 58). 3. Same as Keim. Pelagaud gives no divisions, and regards the Preface as ending at i. 12.

[3] i. 1.

credit for what they have found out; but in judging and confirming what such have discovered, and in drawing rules for virtuous living therefrom, the Greeks are superior.[1] Christians do well to work and teach in secret: death hangs over them. In their exposure to peril there is, however, nothing singular: philosophers like Socrates incurred similar dangers.[2] Their ethical teaching is neither very lofty nor new; it is common to all philosophers.[3] So is it with their abhorrence of idols. They rightly hold that gods, made by the hands of men often worthless and immoral, are not gods. Long before them Heraclitus said, "As well hold converse with walls as worship lifeless things as deities."[4] Do you point to the seeming testimony of miraculous powers? Christ Himself, not less than His followers, owed His power to the names of demons and incantations. And yet with strange contradiction He expelled from His kingdom those who learned the same methods, and boasted like Him of the power of God. If He expelled them justly, while He Himself was guilty as they, He was worthless; if He was not worthless, neither are they.[5] Though I hold them foolish in running into peril, I do not say that a man who adheres to a system of thought, if its doctrine is good, should become an apostate, or pretend that he has done so, or openly deny it.[6] But no one should adopt

[1] i. 2. [2] i. 3. [3] i. 4. [4] i. 5. [5] i. 6. [6] i. 8.

opinions without reason as a guide. To believe without a reason is to act like the devotees of Demeter or Mithras, or those who worship the phantoms of Hecate. In the case of both, wicked men take advantage of those who are easily deceived, and lead them whither they will. For what say the Christians? "Do not examine, but believe.[1] Thy faith will save thee." And in utter contempt of reason they add, "Wisdom in this world is evil, but folly is good."[2] I know all things,[3] and have no need for myself to inquire; but if they keep saying "Do not examine," they must teach what is the nature of the things of which they speak, and whence they are drawn.[4]

The wisest of nations, cities, and men in every age have held by certain general principles of thought and action: to this ancient tradition the Egyptians, Assyrians, Persians and Indians, Samothracians and Druids, alike adhere; but the Jews and Moses have no part nor lot in it. I pass by those who explain away the Mosaic records by plausible allegorising.[5] The Mosaic account in regard to the age of the world is false: the flood being in the time of Deucalion was comparatively recent. Neither the teaching nor the institutions of Moses have any claim to originality.[6] He appropriated doctrines which he had heard from men and nations of repute for wisdom.[7] He borrowed

[1] *μὴ ἐξέταζε, ἀλλὰ πίστευσον*—i. 9. [2] i. 9.
[3] *πάντα γὰρ οἶδα*—i. 12. [4] i. 12. [5] i. 14. [6] i. 19. [7] i. 21.

the rite of circumcision from the Egyptians.[1] He deluded goatherds and shepherds into the belief that there was one God—whom they called the Highest, or Adonai, or the Heavenly, or Sabaoth, or whatever names they please to give to this world—and there their knowledge ceased. It is of no import whether the God over all be called by the name that is usual among the Greeks, or that which obtains among the Indians or Egyptians. Because of their ignorance the Jews were led astray, and under the training of Moses were addicted to sorcery and the worship of angels.[2] Passing by, meanwhile, the distinctive tenets of Judaism, I consider first the claims of Christ. He at least has none of the prestige of antiquity; He began His teaching but a very few years ago.[3] The belief of Christians that He was the Son of God reposes in no way on reasoning, and is worthy of its adherents, men almost without exception plebeian in rank and culture. His religion claims to supersede Judaism. *What might a Jew say of Him and to Him?*[4]

I.—1. He invented His birth from a virgin. He was born in a Jewish village, of a poor woman who earned her bread by spinning. Convicted of adultery with one Panthera, a soldier, she was thrust out by her

[1] i. 22. [2] i. 23-26.
[3] *πρὸ πάνυ ὀλίγων ἐτῶν τῆς διδασκαλίας ταύτης καθηγήσασθαι*—i. 26.
[4] i. 27.

husband, and wandering about secretly gave birth to Jesus.[1] Compelled by His poverty to leave His native country, He went to Egypt as a hired servant, and there learned miraculous arts. Returning home, elated because of His powers, He gave out that He was a God.[2] This account is more credible than yours. God cannot love a corruptible body. Was it at all likely that He should become enamoured of one who was neither wealthy nor of royal birth, but utterly obscure? When the carpenter drove her out in his hatred, why was she not preserved by divine power? Why did her story not meet with credence? What have such things to do with the kingdom of heaven?[3]

2. The narrative of the descent of the Spirit in the form of a dove at the baptism of Jesus is clearly untrustworthy.[4] You say that it happened. But what credible witness beheld this appearance?[5] Who heard the voice from heaven adopting you as God's Son? You bring forward no evidence save your own word,[6] and that of some one who was punished along with you.[7] As a Jew, I believe that the Son of God

[1] This was a common Jewish calumny. See references in Hofmann's Das Leben Jesu nach den Apocryphen, pp. 90, 343. Harris (Apology of Aristides, p. 25) holds that "Panthera" is merely an anagram on the word "Parthenos."

[2] *ἐν ταῖς δυνάμεσι μέγα φρονῶν . . . θεὸν αὑτὸν ἀνηγόρευσε*—i. 28.

[3] i. 39.

[4] i. 40.

[5] *τίς τοῦτο εἶδεν ἀξιόχρεως μάρτυς τὸ φάσμα*—i. 41.

[6] *πλὴν ὅτι σὺ φῂς*—Idem.

[7] Idem.

will come, for my prophet once said in Jerusalem that "the Son of God would come to judge the holy, and to punish the unjust."[1] Why do these prophecies refer to you rather than to the myriads who lived after the prophecy? Other fanatics declared that they had descended from heaven. The prophecies referred to the events of your life may fit in with other events.[2] Moreover, if you were the Son of God, why did you suffer? Your Father did not help you, and you could not help yourself![3] Again, if according to you every man born according to divine providence is a son of God, in what respect do you differ from any other?[4]

3. As an evidence of His divine Sonship, the narrative of the Chaldeans is of no value. They came, it is said, under some mysterious impulse, to worship the infant Jesus as God. They gave intimation thereof to Herod, who in his alarm slew all the children that had been born at the same time, with the aim of destroying Jesus along with them,—being afraid, forsooth, that if Jesus grew up to manhood He might become king in his stead![5] If Herod acted on this ground, how happened it that you did not become a king, but, Son of God though you claim to be, lived so meanly, skulking in secret from fear,[6] accompanied in your

[1] i. 49.

[2] *εἰς τὰ περὶ τούτου ἀναφερομένας προφητείας δύνασθαι καὶ ἄλλοις ἐφαρμόζειν πράγμασι*—i. 50.

[3] Idem. [4] i. 57. [5] i. 58. [6] i. 61.

wanderings by some ten or eleven men of notorious character, publicans and worthless sailors?[1] Further, what necessity was there for you when a child to be carried away into Egypt for safety? From fear of being slain? Why need a God be afraid of death? An angel, you say, came down from heaven warning you and your kindred to flee. Could not the great God, who had already sent two angels for your sake, guard you, His own Son, on the spot? Everything tends to show that your blood is not "such ichor as flows in the blessed gods."[2]

4. The old myths attributed a divine origin to Perseus, Amphion, Æacus, and Minos; but we have not believed in them, even though they wrought deeds truly superhuman to make their claims credible. But you—what have you done good or admirable in word or deed?[3] When challenged in the temple, you displayed nothing noteworthy. Do you bring forward your miracles?[4] Even if we grant the reality of your works of healing, your raising of the dead, your multiplication of the loaves—what is their value? They are to be put exactly in the same rank with the works of sorcerers who, trained as you were in Egypt, make a display of their miraculous powers in the market-place for the sake of a few

[1] i. 62. Iliad, v. 340.

[2] *ἰχὼρ οἷος πέρ τε ῥέει μακάρεσσι θεοῖσιν*—i. 66. Cf. Iliad, v. 340.

[3] *σὺ δὲ δὴ, τί καλὸν ἢ θαυμάσιον ἔργῳ ἢ λόγῳ πεποίηκας;*—i. 67.

[4] Idem.

obols. They, too, drive away spirits from men, cure diseases by blowing upon them, invoke the souls of heroes, set forth costly banquets that are purely imaginary, and make lifeless things move as if they were in life. Are we bound on this account to consider them to be sons of God?[1]

5. What an outrage to speak of your body as the body of God![2] The body of God could not be such as yours, nor formed as yours was, nor fed as yours, nor could it require such a voice or such a method of persuasion.[3] The claims and pretensions of Jesus show that he was a God-hated and abandoned sorcerer.[4]

II. *Hear now what this Jew would say to his fellow-countrymen who have become adherents of Jesus.*

1. For what reason have you abandoned the law of your fathers, and, deserting from us, have adopted a different name and a different manner of living?[5] Your apostasy dates but from yesterday, when we punished Him who imposed upon you. Why do you dishonour the law and the rites on which your own are based? It was the prophet of our God who predicted that the Son of God would come to men.[6] As for Jesus, He was justly punished: there

[1] i. 68. [2] i. 69. [3] i. 70.
[4] *ταῦτα θεομισοῦς ἦν τινος καὶ μοχθηροῦ γόητος*—i. 71.
[5] ii. 1. [6] ii. 4.

is nothing new in His stale stories about a resurrection from the dead and a judgment by God, a reward of the righteous and a fire for the unrighteous.[1] He was a braggart,[2] spoke falsely, and acted in a spirit of impiety.[3] Impostors easily dupe those who are willing to be deceived.

2. You charge us with not believing in Jesus as God. How could we, who proclaimed to all men the coming of one from God, treat Him with contumely when He came? Was it that we might be punished with greater severity than others?[4] But how could we regard as a God one who fulfilled none of His promises,—above all, one who on His conviction shamefully fled, and was betrayed by those whom He called disciples? To flee and to be taken captive are unworthy of God. Still less should a Saviour, a Son of the Most High, have been abandoned and betrayed by those who had intercourse with Him, from whom He had kept back nothing, and whose teacher He had been.[5] A good general is never betrayed—not even a brigand chief at the head of the lowest scoundrels, if they put any value on his services.[6]

3. I pass by many things I could tell of Jesus, not like the fictions recorded by the disciples,[7] and examine their chief apology. "He foreknew all things

[1] ii. 5. [2] ἀλαζών—ii. 7. [3] ii. 7.
[4] ii. 8. [5] ii. 9. [6] ii. 12. [7] ii. 13.

that happened to Him"![1] When a man you have called just is seen to commit some act of injustice, or one whom you have called immortal is seen to be dead, is it any explanation to say that He foretold these things? You do not even say that He only seemed to suffer—you admit that He actually suffered. Is this prediction of His credible? Could the dead man be immortal?[2] What God, or demon, or man of prudence, foreseeing such things, would not have kept out of the way of dangers, instead of wilfully rushing into them?[3] Why did the traitor when forewarned not abandon his design, like all conspirators whose plots are detected?[4] On all these grounds our conclusion is: These things did not happen because they were predicted—that is impossible. Their accomplishment, on the contrary, proves that the supposed prediction is a falsehood.[5] For the disciples could not possibly have carried out their intention to betray or deny if they had been warned beforehand.[6]

4. Look at this theory in another way. If a God predicted these things, their accomplishment was inevitable. God, then, instead of doing good to men as He ought, induced those with whom He ate and drank to become unholy. He who feasted with God became

[1] *αὐτὸν πάντα προεγνωκέναι*—ii. 15.

[2] ii. 16. [3] ii. 17. [4] ii. 18.

[5] *οὔκουν ἐπειδὴ προείρητο ταῦτα γέγονεν· ἀδύνατον γάρ. Ἀλλ' ἐπειδὴ γέγονε, ψεῦδος ἐλέγχεται τὸ προειρηκέναι*—ii. 19.

[6] Idem.

a conspirator against Him! Nay, most monstrous of all, God plots against His guests and makes them traitors![1]

5. You exalt His sufferings mainly on the ground that they were voluntary. But if they were the voluntary sufferings of a God, they could not have been grievous or bitter.[2] Why then does He cry aloud, and wail, and pray for escape, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass"?[3] You have failed to give your fictions an air of credibility.[4] Some of you, like drunken men laying hands on themselves, have corrupted the first text of the Gospel in a threefold, fourfold, or manifold fashion, and modified it to enable you to meet all forms of objections.[5]

6. The predictions of the prophets which you apply to Jesus may be applied to thousands of others with more credibility than to Him.[6] The coming one whom they spoke of was a mighty prince, Lord of all nations and armies.[7] Such a plague as Jesus they never announced.[8] His divinity should have been self-evident, like the sun, which, while illuminating all things, first manifests itself.[9] You use sophisms and define the Son of God as the absolute Logos. But, on your own

[1] ii. 20. [2] ii. 23. [3] ii. 24.
[4] *οὐδὲ τὰ πλάσματα ὑμῶν πιθανῶς ἐπικαλύψαι ἠδυνήθητε*—ii. 26.
[5] ii. 27. [6] ii. 28.
[7] *μέγαν καὶ δυνάστην . . . καὶ πάντων τῶν ἐθνῶν καὶ στρατοπέδων κύριον*—ii. 29.
[8] Idem. [9] ii. 30.

showing, your Logos is not a pure and holy Logos, but a man most shameful who was crucified.[1] If your Logos were the Son of God, we would be at one with you. In your genealogies you represent Jesus as having sprung from the first man and the Jewish kings. If the carpenter's wife had been of such noble lineage, she could not have been ignorant of it.[2]

7. What illustrious or godlike action was achieved by Jesus? Did He put to scorn the men that attacked Him?[3] Could He say, "The deity himself will set me free whenever I wish"?[4] No god avenged Him: the judge who condemned Him met with no fate like that of Pentheus, who became mad and was torn in pieces. Those who put on His head the crown of thorns did so with impunity.[5] If not before, why does He not now give some indication of His divinity? Why does He not punish those who insult both Him and His Father?[6]

8. In His suffering He did nothing like a God. Was the ichor that flowed from the body on the cross akin to that which flows in the veins of the immortal gods?[7] See Him greedily gaping for the vinegar, because He could not endure thirst like any ordinary man, still less like a God.[8] You condemn us for ignoring your explanation of His sufferings, that He endured these things for the good of others, to teach us

[1] ii. 31. [2] ii. 32. [3] ii. 33. [4] Eurip. Bacch., 498.
[5] ii. 34. [6] ii. 35. [7] ii. 36. [8] ii. 37.

to despise punishment.[1] Oh, most believing disciples! On the contrary, He was punished and suffered without having been able to persuade any one in His lifetime, not even His own disciples.[2] He was not free from evils, not even from reproach. You will hardly dare to say that, after He had failed to win over the people in this world, He went to Hades to secure disciples there![3] If such apologies satisfy you, why do you not regard as more godlike than He such as have died even more dishonourably? Any robber or murderer of similar audacity might boast that he was a god on the ground that he foretold what he actually suffered.[4] You now die along with Him; but His disciples, so far from dying with Him, openly denied Him.[5] When on earth, He drew to His side only ten sailors and publicans of the lowest type: how ridiculous that, now that He is dead, any one that wishes can persuade thousands![6]

9. By what process of reasoning were you induced to regard Him as the Son of God? Was it because you know that His punishment took place for the destruction of the Father of evil?[7] Have not many others been punished with not less ignominy than He?[8] Or was it because He healed the lame and the

[1] ii. 38. [2] ii. 39, 41, 42. Cf. Cyril con. Julian., vi. 213 B, C.
[3] ii. 43. [4] ii. 44. [5] ii. 45. [6] ii. 46.
[7] *τὴν κόλασιν αὐτοῦ ὑπὲρ καθαιρέσεως τοῦ πατρὸς τῆς κακίας γεγονυῖαν*—ii. 47.
[8] ii. 47

blind, and, according to your statements, raised the dead?[1] Oh, light and truth! In your own records He expressly declares that others will employ like miracles who are yet wicked sorcerers. In revealing the nature of the miracles of others, truth compelled Him to condemn His own. The same works cannot prove one man to be a God, another to be a sorcerer.[2]

10. If not by His miracles, was it by His prediction that He would rise again after His death that you came to believe in His divinity?[3] How many charlatans have done the like to gain the ear of the populace and make profit by their error? Such were Zamolxis among the Scythians; Rhampsinitus in Egypt, who is said to have played with dice in Hades with Demeter, and returned with a golden napkin as a gift from her; and many others. But the point at issue is, Did any one who was truly dead rise with his own body? You regard these as myths, and fancy that in His voice from the cross when He expired, in the earthquake and the darkness, you have a graceful and plausible catastrophe to the drama.[4] When alive He could not save Himself; when dead He arose and displayed His pierced hands! Who saw this? A half-frenzied woman, as you say, or some one implicated in the

[1] ii. 48. Cf. Cyril con. Julian., vi. 191 E.
[2] ii. 49.
[3] ii. 54.
[4] *τὴν καταστροφὴν τοῦ δράματος εὐσχημόνως ἢ πιθανῶς*—ii. 55.

same imposture, who because of a peculiar temperament had dreamed it, or whose fancy created a phantom he desired to see,[1]—a very common experience,—or more probably some one who wished by such a lie to form a basis for like imposture.[2]

11. If Jesus desired to show that He was truly divine, He ought to have disappeared straightway from the cross;[3] or when He rose He ought to have appeared to the very persons that had insulted Him, to the judge who condemned Him, and to all men in general.[4] He had no need to conceal Himself from fear of men.[5] His action was inconsistent. When He was in the body, and made no converts, He preached to all men unrestrainedly; when He had risen, He showed Himself in secret to one woman only and His own troop of followers.[6] His punishment was seen by all, His resurrection by one: the opposite should have been the case.[7] If He wished to teach us to despise death, He

[1] *τίς τοῦτο εἶδε; Γυνὴ πάροιστρος, ὥς φατε, καὶ εἴ τις ἄλλος τῶν ἐκ τῆς αὐτῆς γοητείας, ἤτοι κατά τινα διάθεσιν ὀνειρώξας, ἢ κατὰ τὴν αὐτοῦ βούλησιν δόξῃ πεπλανημένῃ φαντασιωθεὶς*—ii. 55.

[2] ii. 55.

[3] ii. 68.

[4] *αὐτοῖς τοῖς ἐπηρεάσασι, καὶ τῷ καταδικάσαντι καὶ ὅλως πᾶσιν ὀφθῆναι*—ii. 63.

[5] ii. 67.

[6] *ἐνὶ μόνῳ γυναίῳ καὶ τοῖς ἑαυτοῦ θιασώταις κρύβδην παρεφαίνετο*—ii. 70. Neumann (Jahrbücher für Prot. Theol., 1885) thinks that the word *θιασώται* is here used in its technical sense, and that it shows that Celsus regarded the Christian communities as *θίασοι*. Cf. iii. 22. In v. 62 he applies the same term to the worshippers of Antinous.

[7] ii. 70.

ought, when He rose, to have summoned all men openly to the light.[1]

12. All these things are taken from your own books: we need no further testimony—you are slain with your own weapons.[2] O most high and heavenly one! what God, on appearing among men, meets with incredulity, especially when He appears to those who have been waiting for Him so long?[3] How could we recognise Him who, by uttering threats and abuse, plainly acknowledged His inability to persuade—a position not worthy of a God, not even of a prudent man?[4] We believe, indeed, that there will be a resurrection from the dead, and that we shall enjoy eternal life; and we believe that our Messiah will be the pattern and leader of that, to show that with God nothing is impossible. Where, then, is He, that we may see and believe Him?[5] Did He come for the very purpose that we might not believe in Him?[6] No: the only conclusion is that Jesus was not the Messiah of God, but a man, and such a man as truth itself reveals and reason demonstrates.[7]

Part II.

I.—1. The conflict between Jews and Christians is a silly conflict: it may fitly be compared to the pro-

[1] ii. 73. [2] ii. 74. [3] ii. 75. [4] ii. 76. [5] ii. 77. [6] ii. 78.
[7] καὶ τοιοῦτος οἷον αὐτὸ τὸ ἀληθὲς ἐμφανίζει καὶ ὁ λόγος δείκνυσιν—ii. 79.

verbial fight about the shadow of an ass.[1] The point at issue is of no weight: both believe in the predictions of the coming of a Saviour to mankind,—they only differ as to whether He has come or not.[2]

2. The revolt of the Egyptians under Moses—for the Jews were Egyptians—finds its parallel in the revolt of the followers of Jesus from the Jewish form of worship.[3] The same spirit of revolt is still dominant among them, so that if all men desired to become Christians they would not desire it.[4] At the outset, when they were few, they were of one mind; but as their numbers increased they split into sects and factions.[5] The process of division still goes on: they have nothing in common but the name,—in all other respects they are completely divided.[6] Their compact is all the more wonderful as it rests on no plausible basis, unless such a basis be found in revolt and the gain which springs from it, and the fear of those without.[7] Why speak of their misrepresentations of the ancient traditions?[8] of the terrors they have invented? Not that I would weaken the belief in the punishment of the unjust and the reward of the just,—only I object to their methods. As the priests of Cybele with their tambourines go booming around those whom they initiate into their rites, so do the Christians deal with

[1] *ὄνου σκιᾶς μάχη*—iii. 1. [2] iii. 1. [3] iii. 5.
[4] iii. 9. [5] iii. 10. [6] iii. 12. [7] iii. 14.
[8] *τὰ τοῦ παλαιοῦ λόγου παρακούσματα συμπλάττοντες*—iii. 16.

their votaries.[1] Their faith reminds one of the Egyptian temples. As you approach you mark their splendid precincts, their groves, their majestic porticoes, their forms of worship, full of piety and mystery; but when you enter in you see that their deity is a cat, or an ape, or a crocodile, or a goat.[2] You laugh at the Egyptians, though they say that their worship is not directed to ephemeral animals but to eternal ideas. In your accounts of Jesus there is nothing more venerable.[3]

3. The Greeks believed that the Dioscuri, Heracles, and Asclepius were men who became gods. You do not regard them as divine, though they achieved many noble deeds for the good of men; yet you say that Jesus after His death was seen by His own troop of followers. If He were seen, it was only a shadow.[4] Thousands will testify that they have seen Asclepius himself, and no phantom, engaged in the work of healing and doing good.[5] No one regards Abaris the Hyperborean as a god, though he was borne along like an arrow in his flight;[6] nor the Clazomenian whose soul often left his body and went about bodiless.[7] In giving worship to a prisoner who was put to death, the Christians are doing exactly like the Getæ in their worship of Zamolxis, and like many others.[8]

[1] iii. 16. [2] iii. 17. [3] iii. 19. [4] iii. 22.
[5] iii. 24. Cf. Cyril con. Julian., vi. 200 A, B; vii. 235 C, D.
[6] iii. 31. [7] iii. 32. [8] iii. 34.

The worship paid to the favourite of Hadrian by the inhabitants of the city of Antinous corresponds to the worship paid to Jesus;[1] but the Egyptians will not brook his being compared to Zeus or Apollo.[2] Blinded by faith, the Christians accept the supernatural dogmas about Jesus,[3] pay Him homage as a God, though He was formed of a mortal and corruptible body.[4] Though He laid aside these corruptible elements would He therefore be a God? And if so, why not Dionysus and Asclepius?[5] They jest at the worshippers of Zeus because the Cretans show his tomb; yet they themselves worship a man from a tomb.[6]

4. Their teaching is plainly condemned by the want of culture that marks its adherents. Here are their maxims: "Let no educated man, no man of wisdom or prudence, approach; but if any one be ignorant, or stupid, or silly, let him approach with confidence."[7] By acknowledging that such are worthy of their God, they prove that they have only the will

[1] iii. 36. Dietrichson makes a singular application of this allusion. He regards the death of Antinous as a voluntary sacrifice, and represents the ground of his deification thus: "If the sacrificed Christ be a god, why not the sacrificed Antinous?" (p. 90). Celsus's argument is precisely the reverse: Christ could not be a God, because He was put to death, whether voluntarily or not.

[2] iii. 37. [3] iii. 39. [4] iii. 41. [5] iii. 42.

[6] *οὐδὲν ἧττον σέβομεν τὸν ἀπὸ τοῦ τάφου*—iii. 43.

[7] *μηδεὶς προσίτω πεπαιδευμένος, μηδεὶς σοφὸς, μηδεὶς φρόνιμος· ἀλλ' εἴ τις ἀμαθὴς, εἴ τις ἀνόητος, εἴ τις νήπιος, θαρρῶν ἡκέτω*—iii. 44.

and the power to win over the foolish, the ignoble, slaves, women, and children.[1] What is the evil of education and liberal culture? Instead of interfering with the knowledge of God, does it not aid in the higher attainment of divine truth?[2] They are like jugglers in the market-place, who make a display of their powers before senseless people, or slaves, or children, but will not enter into any gathering of men of sense.[3] We can see in their own homes wool-workers, and shoemakers, and fullers—men devoid of all culture—who will not dare to utter a syllable in presence of their masters, men of gravity and insight; but when they get hold of the children privately, they recount all sorts of marvellous things. They tell them to pay no heed to their father or their teachers, but to obey them; that the former talk idle tales,—that they alone can teach them how to live, and the secret of happiness. If they see any teacher or the fathers approach as they are speaking, the more cautious of them are alarmed. But those of greater impudence stimulate the children to throw off the reins, and whisper that they cannot give them any good instruction in presence of fatuous and corrupt men who seek to punish them; but that they will attain to perfect knowledge if they go with the women and their playmates into the women's apart-

[1] iii. 44. Cf. Cyril con. Julian., vi. 206 A, B.
[2] iii. 49. [3] iii. 50.

ments, or into the workshop of the fuller or the shoemaker. And so saying they persuade them.[1]

5. If my charge is harsh, its truth is my defence. Here is the proof. What is the invitation to other mysteries? "If any one has clean hands and a prudent tongue, is pure from all pollution, has a good conscience, and has lived well and justly, let him come." Listen to their proclamation: "If any one is a sinner, or senseless, or silly, him will the kingdom of God receive." What do you mean by a sinner but the thief, the housebreaker, the poisoner, the plunderer of churches and tombs? What other classes would a man invite who wished to summon a band of robbers?[2]

6. Your defence is that God was sent to sinners. Why not to those without sin? What evil is it not to have sinned?[3] You say that God will receive the unjust man if he humble himself, but the just man who has always looked up to God with holy aspirations He will not receive.[4] A conscientious judge is unmoved by the wailing of criminals; but your God is influenced in His judgments by flattery rather than truth.[5] I repeat, Whence arises this special preference for sinners?[6] Do you open your doors

[1] iii. 55.

[2] *τίνας ἄν ἄλλους προκηρύττων λῃστὰς ἐκάλεσε;*—iii. 59. Cf. Cyril con. Julian., vii. 245 B.

[3] *τί κακόν ἐστι τὸ μὴ ἡμαρτεκέναι;*—iii. 62.

[4] iii. 62.

[5] *ὁ θεὸς δ' ἄρα οὐ πρὸς ἀλήθειαν, ἀλλὰ πρὸς κολακείαν δικάζει*—iii. 63.

[6] iii. 64.

widely to the profligate, because you can bring no influence to bear upon the truly good? A vain hope! Can any one who sins both by nature and habit be completely transformed either by punishment or pity? The sinless are partakers of the better life.[1] "God can do all things," is your reply.[2] Be it so. He will not desire what is wicked. And if, mastered by compassion, He lightens the lot of the wicked, and casts aside the good who will not use such means to evoke His sympathy, He is guilty of the grossest injustice.[3]

7. Hear other maxims of theirs: "Enslaved by wisdom so called, wise men reject our teaching."[4] What man of sense can adhere to such a system?[5] They act like charlatans who promise to restore health to the sick, but warn them to pay no heed to skilled physicians, to prevent the exposure of their ignorance. "Avoid physicians." "Knowledge begets an unhealthy state of soul, and makes men stumble."[6] "Attend to me: I alone will save you."[7] They are like persons suffering from ophthalmia, who, in the presence of those similarly afflicted, charge with blindness men that see.[8] I say no more about their teachers, but affirm that they insult God; that they lead evil men astray by empty hopes, by persuading them to contemn things which are superior on

[1] iii. 65. [2] δυνήσεται πάντα ὁ θεός—iii. 70.
[3] Idem. [4] iii. 72. [5] iii. 73. [6] iii. 75.
[7] ἐμοι προσέχετε· ἐγὼ ὑμᾶς σώσω μόνος—iii. 75.
[8] iii. 76, 77.

the ground that such abstinence will be better for them.[1]

8. The assertion made by the Christians that a God, or Son of God, has descended to earth, by the Jews that such an one will descend, is so disgraceful that it needs no lengthened refutation.[2] What purpose was served by such a descent of God? Was it to learn what was passing among men? Does He not know all things? Or knowing, can He not by divine power correct what is amiss unless He send some one to be born for this purpose?[3] Let God leave His throne empty, and everything would be overturned: to make the least change is to introduce chaos.[4] Or was it because men did not know God, and so robbed Him of His due honour, that He came down in order to be known, and to discriminate between believers and unbelievers? This is to ascribe to your God an altogether human vanity, —to make Him act like a vulgar man who has risen to great wealth.[5] No, you say; not for His own sake does God wish to make Himself known, but for our salvation. Why then, after so many ages, did He remember to justify men, but think nothing of it before?[6] They chatter about God in an irreverent

[1] iii. 78.

[2] iv. 2.

[3] *ἆρ' οὐχ οἷόν τε αὐτῷ δυνάμει θείᾳ ἐπανορθοῦν, ἐὰν μὴ φύσει τινὰ ἐπὶ τοῦτο πέμψῃ;*—iv. 3. Cf. Cyril con. Julian., iv. 138 A.

[4] iv. 5.

[5] *καθάπερ οἱ νεόπλουτοι τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἐπιδεικτιῶντες*—iv. 6.

[6] *νῦν ἆρα μετὰ τοσοῦτον αἰῶνα . . . πρότερον δὲ ἠμέλει;*—iv. 7 Cf. Cyril con. Julian., iii. 106 C.

fashion. By lies about the punishment of sinners they wish to strike terror into the ignorant.[1] Their belief in the burning up of the world is an echo and misunderstanding of Greek traditions. Conflagrations and floods come in cycles; the flood in the time of Deucalion will therefore be followed by a conflagration; hence the Christians erroneously believe that a god will descend, armed with fire like a torturer.[2]

9. What is the true conception of Deity? Let us examine this alleged descent of God from this point of view. I state nothing new—only traditional beliefs long admitted.[3] God is good, and beautiful, and blessed, and possesses these qualities in perfection.[4] A descent among men implies a change, and of necessity a change from good to evil, from blessedness to wretchedness, from best to worst. It is the nature of a mortal to be liable to change, but of an immortal to be immutable. Such a change, therefore, God could not undergo.[5] If, then, it be thus impossible for God to change into a mortal body, He does not really change, but makes the beholders fancy that He does, and thus is guilty of deceit and lying. In dealing with friends who are sick or mad, or in warding off

[1] iv. 10.

[2] *ὁ θεὸς καταβήσεται δίκην βασανιστοῦ πῦρ φέρων*—iv. 11.

[3] *οὐδὲν καινὸν, ἀλλὰ πάλαι δεδογμένα*—iv. 14.

[4] Cf. Plato, Phædo, c. 26, p. 246 E.

[5] *τῷ δ' ἀθανάτῳ κατὰ τὰ αὐτὰ καὶ ὡσαύτως ἔχειν. Οὐκ ἂν οὖν οὐδε ταύτην τὴν μεταβολὴν θεὸς δέχοιτο*—iv. 14. Cf. Plato, Respub., c. 19, p. 380 D, 381 B, C, E.

attacks of enemies, it may be legitimate to use such methods: but God has no friend who is sick or mad, He fears no enemy, and therefore needs not have recourse to deceit.[1]

10. A descent of God being thus impossible on philosophical grounds, let us test the reasons assigned for it. The Jews say that the wickedness of the world necessitates the coming of one from God who will punish the unjust and purify all things,[2] like what took place at the first deluge, and the overthrowing of the tower of Babel. To this I answer that the story of Babel is a corruption of the story of the Alcidæ, and the destruction of Sodom analogous to the story of Phaëthon.[3] To these statements of the Jews the Christians add that the Son of God has already been sent because of the sins of the Jews, and that by giving Jesus bitter gall to drink they have drawn upon themselves the bitter wrath of God.[4]

11. This conflict between Jews and Christians is supremely ridiculous. They can only be compared to a cluster of bats, or ants, or frogs, holding an assembly in a marsh,[5] or worms meeting in a corner of a dunghill, and disputing with one another as to who were the greatest sinners, and saying: "To us God reveals

[1] iv. 18.

[2] iv. 20.

[3] iv. 21. Cf. Cyril con. Julian., iv. 135 A.

[4] *καὶ χυλὴν ποτίσαντες ἐπι σφᾶς αὐτοὺς ἐκ θεοῦ χόλον ἐπεσπάσαντο* —iv. 22.

[5] Cf. Plato, Phædo, 109 A, B.

all things. Abandoning the heavenly regions, and overlooking the rest of the mighty world, He holds intercourse with us alone, never ceasing to send and inquire how our fellowship with Him may be eternal." They are like worms who say: "God exists. We are next to Him, and He has made us in all respects like unto Him. All things are for our sakes, and have been ordained to be our servants. Since, however, some have transgressed, God will come or send His Son to burn up the wicked, and give us eternal life along with Him." Such a discussion would be more tolerable on the part of worms and frogs than between Jews and Christians.[1]

12. For who were these Jews, and what are their records? They were runaway slaves from Egypt, who have always been held of no account, beloved of God though they claim to be.[2] They attempted to trace their origin to the first generation of jugglers and impostors, bringing forward no evidence but obscure and ambiguous sayings.[3] Other nations—the Athenians and Egyptians for example—put forth claims to antiquity, and bring forward proofs that they were earth-born.[4] But the Jews, crouching and confined in a corner of Palestine, who had never heard what Hesiod and thousands of inspired poets had sung long before, manufactured an incredible and

[1] iv. 23. [2] iv. 31. [3] iv. 32, 33.
[4] Cf. Cyril con. Julian., vii. 221 E, 222 A.

inartistic tale about a man formed by the hand of God into whom God breathed life; about a woman out of the man's side; about commandments of God and the opposition of a serpent.[1] What old wives' fable is this! What impiety to represent God as so impotent that He could not secure the obedience of the one man whom He Himself had created![2] Then they tell of a deluge and a monstrous ark, and of a dove and crow who played the part of messengers: what is this but a fraudulent corruption of the story of Deucalion?[3] They tell further of the begetting of children out of season, the treacherous plotting of brothers, the grief of a father, and the fraud of a mother. They represent God as giving presents of asses and sheep, and giving wells to the righteous.[4] The story of Lot and his daughters is more monstrous than that of Thyestes.[5] What need to tell of brothers selling a brother; of the dreams of a butler and baker, as also of Pharaoh; of their elucidation by Joseph; of his appointment to high authority in Egypt; of the gifts he gave to them who sold him, when, driven by hunger, they came to purchase food; of his going up with pomp to the grave of his father? This divine race of the Jews was driven to the outskirts of Egypt, and compelled to pasture their flocks in the poorest district.[6]

[1] Cf. Cyril con. Julian., iii. 75 A. [2] iv. 36. [3] iv. 41.
[4] iv. 43. [5] iv. 44. [6] iv. 45, 46, 47.

13. No doubt the more reasonable among the Jews and the Christians are ashamed of these stories, and give them an allegorical interpretation.[1] But the attempt to form into a whole things utterly incongruous is more monstrous than the very myth they seek to interpret.[2] As an illustration, take the "Dispute between Jason and Papiscus,"[3] which evokes pity and hatred rather than ridicule. The refutation of such patent absurdities would be superfluous.

14. The descent of God to men is disproved by a consideration of God's relation to matter and of the nature of evil. All the works of God are immortal. The soul is the work of God, but the body is of a different nature. In this there is no difference between the body of a bat or a frog and that of a man, for the matter is the same, and the corruptible element similar.[4] The nature of the forementioned bodies is common to all, and it is the one nature which passes from one to another amid recurring changes.[5] Nothing born of matter is immortal.[6]

15. There has been no increase or diminution of the sum of evils in the universe.[7] Unless one be given to philosophy, it is difficult to grasp the origin

[1] iv. 48. [2] iv. 49, 51.

[3] iv. 52. This work, which is lost, is usually attributed to Aristo of Pella. Donaldson thinks that there is no authority for this (History of Christian Literature, ii. 56-61). Lardner gives as date 140 (Credibility, vol. ii. p. 311); Donaldson, before 150.

[4] iv. 52. Cf. Cyril con. Julian., ii. 65 E. Plato, Tim., c. 13, p. 41 C.

[5] iv. 60. [6] iv. 61. [7] iv. 62.

of evil: to the people it may suffice to say that evils are not from God, but are inherent in matter.[1] All mortal things revolve in the same circuit from the beginning to the end; and in accordance with definite cycles the same things must have been, are, and will be.[2] The visible world has not been given to man, but everything is born and perishes for the preservation of the whole. God does not require to renew and repair His work.[3] What you deem evil is not necessarily so; for you do not know whether it may not be of service to you, or to another, or to the whole.[4]

16. To attribute anger and threatenings to God as if He were subject to human passions is impious and absurd.[5] If a man, who was angry at the Jews, destroyed them all from the youth upwards and burned their city, is it not ridiculous that the Most High God, in carrying out His anger and menaces, should send His Son to suffer what He suffered? Let me, however, leave the Jews alone, and speak of the whole of nature.[6]

17. Their creed rests on the hypothesis that God made all things for men.[7] Even if I grant that

[1] ἐκ θεοῦ μὲν οὐκ ἔστι κακὰ, ὕλη δὲ πρόσκειται—iv. 65. Cf. Plato, Polit., 273 B.

[2] iv. 65. [3] iv. 69. [4] iv. 70. Cf. Plato, Leg., 905 B.

[5] iv. 72. Cf. Cyril con. Julian., v. 155 D, E; vi. 160 D; v. 171 D, E.

[6] iv. 73. [7] iv. 74.

thunders and rains are works of God—which I do not —I hold that they have been appointed for the sustenance of plants and herbs and thorns, not less than of man. If you say that these spring up for his use, I ask, Why for us any more than for the most irrational animals?[1] We with all our weary toil barely secure a miserable sustenance; they neither plough nor sow—all things grow up spontaneously for them.[2] If you say with Euripides, "The sun and the night are servants to mortals," I ask, Why to us rather than to ants and flies?[3] If you say that we are the masters of creation because we hunt and feed on other animals, I answer, Why have we not rather been made for them, seeing that they hunt and eat us? Nay, we need nets and weapons and many men and dogs: nature has supplied them with weapons.[4] Now you have the power to lay hold of and use the irrational animals; but at a period when there were neither cities, nor arts, nor communities, nor weapons, the likelihood is that they hunted and ate men.[5] Thus at first man was subject to wild beasts.[6]

18. If some men seem to differ from irrational creatures because of their building of cities, their civil constitutions and governments, that is nothing

[1] iv. 75.

[2] *μόλις καὶ ἐπιπόνως τρεφόμεθα· τοῖς δ' ἄσπαρτα καὶ ἀνήροτα πάντα φύονται*—iv. 76.

[3] iv. 77. Eurip. Phœn., 546. [4] iv. 78. [5] iv. 79. [6] iv. 80.

to the point, for ants and bees do likewise. Bees have a leader, with trains and retinue; they have their wars and victories, their cities and suburbs: they pass judgment on the idle and the wicked.[1] In taking forethought for the future, the ants are not a whit behind men. When they see one of their number worn out and weary, they help him to carry his load; they have special burial-grounds; when they meet they converse with one another. They have reason in full measure, and general concepts, and the power of speech. If, then, some one were to look down from heaven to earth, what difference would he see between our actions and those of ants and bees?[2]

19. Some irrational animals have a knowledge of sorcery. Men, then, cannot plume themselves on this ground, for in this respect serpents and eagles are superior: they know, too, many charms against poison and sickness.[3] Or take the highest department of human knowledge, the power to grasp the notion of God. With great plausibility many animals may claim this knowledge. For what is more divine than to foreknow and declare the future? It is from animals, from birds especially, that men derive this knowledge. Does it not follow that these creatures are by nature in closer fellowship with God, possessed

[1] iv. 81. [2] iv. 83, 84, 85. [3] iv. 86.

of greater wisdom, and more beloved by Him?[1] Men of intelligence affirm that they have forms of intercourse more sacred than ours. There is no creature to whom an oath is more sacred than the elephant.[2] In piety, in the mutual affection of parent and child, the stork is pre-eminent: all men know of the filial love of the phœnix.[3]

20. All points to the conclusion that the universe was not made for man, any more than for the lion, the eagle, or the dolphin, but that the cosmos might be absolutely perfect, as a work of God ought. All things have been created, not for any one, but for the whole. God cares for the whole, and His providence never forsakes it; it undergoes no change for the worse, and God needs not to restore it after lapse of time; nor is He angry at men any more than at apes or flies; nor does He threaten His creatures, each of which has its own appointed place.[4]

21. Ye Jews and Christians, no God or Son of God has ever come down to earth, or will come down. But if you speak of certain angels, what is their nature? Do you call them gods, or are they of some other race? Of some other race, and probably demons.[5]

[1] ἐγγυτέρω τῆς θείας ὁμιλίας ἐκεῖνα πεφυκέναι καὶ εἶναι σοφώτερα καὶ θεοφιλέστερα—iv. 88.

[2] Idem.

[3] iv. 98.

[4] καὶ μέλει τῷ θεῷ τοῦ ὅλου, καὶ τοῦτ' οὔ ποτε ἀπολείπει πρόνοια, οὐδὲ κάκιον γίνεται . . . οὐδὲ τούτοις ἀπειλεῖ, ὧν ἕκαστον ἐν τῷ μέρει τὴν αὐτοῦ μοῖραν εἴληφε—iv. 99.

[5] v. 2.

22. It is strange that the Jews should worship the heavens and the angels therein, while they pass by the most august parts of it, the sun, moon, and stars. Is it reasonable to regard the whole as God, and its parts as not divine? Is it reasonable to give great reverence to beings that are said to draw nigh to men in darkness or in dreams in the form of shadowy phantoms, and to regard as of no consequence the most conspicuous heralds of the upper sphere, the truly heavenly angels, which so brilliantly give prophetic signs to all?[1]

23. They have another folly. They suppose that when God, like a cook, brings fire, all the rest of the race will be burned, and that they alone will remain; and that those of them who have been long dead will rise in their very flesh from the earth,—a hope fit for worms! For what soul of man would long for a rotten body?[2] I am aware that some of you Christians regard this doctrine as impure and impossible. For what body utterly corrupted could regain its original nature and the pristine constitution out of which it was dissolved? "With God all things are possible," is their absurd refuge. But God cannot do what is disgraceful, nor does He will what is contrary to nature. He will not carry out our sinful inclinations. He is not the author of disorder, but of a nature governed by rectitude and justice. He could bestow eternal life upon the soul; but dead bodies, as Heracli-

[1] v. 6. [2] Cf. Cyril con. Julian., vii. 250 B.

tus says, are cast out as worse than dung. To speak of the flesh as eternal is contrary to reason, and therefore God will not and cannot make it so. For He is the reason of all things that are, and He cannot do anything contrary to reason or contrary to Himself.[1]

24. The Jews, like other separate nationalities, have established laws according to their national genius, and preserve a form of worship which has at least the merit of being ancestral and national,—for each nation has its own institutions, whatever they may chance to be. This seems an expedient arrangement, not only because different minds think differently, and because it is our duty to preserve what has been established in the interests of the state, but also because in all probability the parts of the earth were originally allotted to different overseers, and are now administered accordingly.[2] To do what is pleasing to these overseers is to do what is right: to abolish the institutions that have existed in each place from the first is impiety.[3] We may cite Herodotus in favour of this position.[4] Nations differ very widely, but each thinks

[1] *Αὐτος γάρ ἐστιν ὁ πάντων τῶν ὄντων λόγος· οὐδὲν οὖν οἷός τε παρὰ λόγον, οὐδε παρ' ἑαυτὸν ἐργάσασθαι*—v. 14.

[2] *ὡς εἰκὸς, τὰ μέρη τῆς γῆς ἐξ ἀρχῆς ἄλλα ἄλλοις ἐπόπταις νενεμημένα . . . ταύτῃ καὶ διοικεῖται*—v. 25. Cf. Cyril con. Julian., iv. 115 D; iv. 143 A, B; iv. 148 B.

[3] *παραλύειν δὲ οὐχ ὅσιον εἶναι τὰ ἐξ ἀρχῆς κατὰ τόπους νενομισμένα*—v. 25.

[4] Celsus quotes Herod., ii. 18, where it is recorded that Ammon refused the request of the inhabitants of Marea and Apis to be ranked as Libyans and not as Egyptians in matters of religion.

its own institutions the best. Some worship one deity, some another. Some regard sheep as sacred; others abstain from goats, or crocodiles, or cows. The Scythians regard it as an act of virtue to feast on men; some Indians consider it an act of piety to eat their fathers.[1] We may say with Herodotus,[2] "The judgment of Pindar is sound, that law is the king of all things."[3] The conclusion, therefore, is that all men ought to live according to the customs of their country, and are not to be blamed for so doing; and that Christians are to be blamed for leaving the customs of their fathers, and adhering to the teaching of Jesus.[4] We do not then blame the Jews if they adopt this attitude; but if they glory in their possession of peculiar wisdom, and avoid intercourse with other nations as if they were not equally pure, we say, as before, that there is nothing original in their doctrine nor in their customs. Their doctrine as to heaven and the Highest God has been long held by the Persians. "They are wont," says Herodotus,[5] "to go up to the tops of the mountains and offer sacrifices, and they call the whole vault of heaven Zeus." For it makes no difference whether you call the Highest Zeus, or Zen, or Adonai, or Sabaoth, or Ammoun, like the Egyptians, or Pappæus, like the Scythians. The practice of circumcision is no claim to special sanctity:

[1] Cf. Cyril con. Julian., iv. 138 A, B.
[2] Herod., iii. 18.
[3] v. 34.
[4] v. 35.
[5] Herod., i. 131.

the Egyptians and Colchians did so before them. So is it with their abstinence from swine and other unclean food. There is no probability that they were specially honoured by God, or loved by Him with peculiar love, and that angels were sent to them only, as if they had obtained some region of the blessed; for we see both the people themselves and the country which they receive according to their deserts.[1] Let this band then depart, duly punished for its arrogance: they never knew the true God, but, enslaved by the sorcery of Moses, became his disciples to no good end.[2] And, as they depart, let the second band come forward, and I will ask them whence they come, and who is the author of their ancestral laws.[3] They will mention no one, inasmuch as they derive their origin from the Jews, and from no other quarter is their teacher and "choir-master."[4]

25. Waiving all charges against their teacher, let us suppose that He was truly an angel. Was He the first and only one that came? If they say so, they will contradict themselves. For they say that others came—sixty or seventy at a time—who became wicked, and were punished by being chained and cast under the earth; and they add that hot springs are their tears.[5] And they assert that to the tomb of Jesus Himself an

[1] Cf. Cyril con. Julian., v. 176 B.
[2] v. 41.
[3] Cf. Cyril con. Julian., vii. 238 D.
[4] χοροστάτης—v. 33.
[5] Book of Enoch, c. x.

angel came (some say one, others two), who told the women that He had risen. For the Son of God, as it seems, was not able to open the tomb, but required some one to remove the stone! So one angel came to the carpenter about Mary, and another to tell them to take up the child and flee. Why recount in detail those that are said to have been sent to Moses and the others? If others were sent, it is manifest that Jesus came from the same God. Let it be supposed that He came with a weightier message, as if the Jews had been sinning or corrupting their religion, still He is not the only one that came to the race of man.[1] Though some of them think otherwise,[2] it is plain that the Jews and Christians have the same God. Those of the "Great Church" receive as true the accounts of the creation in six days, and of God resting on the seventh. Both agree in regard to the first man, and deduce their genealogies from him. Both accept the narratives about the going of the children of Israel into Egypt, and their flight from it.[3] I know that some hold the Creator—the God of the Jews—to be different from, and opposed to, the God from whom Jesus came. In truth, their divisions are endless. They have "carnal" and "spiritual" men. Some, who call themselves Christians, wish to live in all things as the Jews. There are among them Sibyllists and Simonians, Marcellians, Harpocratians, disciples

[1] v. 52, 54. [2] The Marcionites. [3] v. 59.

who call themselves after Mariamne, and Martha, and Marcionites.[1] Some of them wallow about in gross darkness, more polluted than that of the troop who worship Antinous.[2] Some of them are called "cauterised in the ears," some "enigmas," some "sirens." They utter unspeakable blasphemies against one another, and so bitter is their mutual hatred that they would not yield one jot for the sake of concord. But notwithstanding all their divisions and abusive controversies, you may hear them all saying, "The world is crucified unto me and I unto the world."[3]

II.—1. Even though their dogmas have no basis—no authoritative source—let us examine them. First, we speak of truths which they have corrupted from imperfect apprehension.[4] Their views of God, as well as their ethical teaching, have been far better expressed by the Greeks, and that without any arrogant declarations as from God or a Son of God.[5] Take the teaching of Plato.[6] Instead of the blind faith which the Christians demand, Plato sought by questions and answers to illumine the minds of those who studied his

[1] v. 61, 62. [2] τῶν Ἀντίνου τοῦ κατ' Αἴγυπτον θιασωτῶν—v. 63.
[3] v. 63, 64. [4] v. 65. [5] vi. 1.
[6] vi. 3, 6. Celsus here quotes from the spurious Epistle, vii. 341 C, D. All his quotations from Plato are given with perfect accuracy, and agree almost literally with the text of Hermann. In this way we can test both the accuracy of Celsus and the care with which Origen quotes the words of Celsus. Cf. Cyril con. Julian., ii. 49 A, D; 57, 58 A, D.

philosophy.[1] He does not swagger nor close the mouth of any inquirer, nor does he bid them then and there believe that there is such a God, and that He has such a Son, and that He has come down and conversed with him.[2] When he describes the chief good as inexpressible, he gives the reason.[3] He does not brag and say falsely that he has discovered something new, or that he has come down from heaven to announce it, but acknowledges the sources of his teaching. He does not like them say, "Believe in the first place that He whom I introduce to you is the Son of God, though He was disgracefully bound and punished—though but yesterday before the eyes of all He was treated most dishonourably: on this account believe it all the more."[4] Moreover, in regard to this demand for implicit faith, if some introduce one person, some another, while all have the one ready watchword, "Believe if you wish to be saved, or go away"—what will men do who have a true desire to be saved? Will they cast dice and divine whither they should turn, and to whom they should adhere?[5]

2. They say that "wisdom among men is foolish-

[1] vi. 7. Celsus continues his quotation from Plato, Epis., vii. 341 E.

[2] vi. 8.

[3] vi. 9. Cf. Plato, Epis., vii. 342 A, B.

[4] *ταύτῃ καὶ μᾶλλον πίστευσον*—vi. 10.

[5] *κοινὸν δὲ πάντων ἢ καὶ πρόχειρον· πίστευσον, εἰ σωθῆναι θέλεις, ἢ ἄπιθι· τί ποιήσουσιν οἱ ἀληθῶς σώζεσθαι θέλοντες; Ἢ κύβους ἀναῤῥίψαντες μαντεύσονται, ποῖ τράπωνται, καὶ τίσι προσθῶνται*—vi. 11.

ness with God." What is true in this saying is borrowed from the Greek thinkers. "Men of Athens," said Socrates, "I have obtained this reputation only because of my wisdom. What kind of wisdom? Such wisdom as is attainable by man: for in this point of view I am inclined to believe that I am wise."[1] Their ground for such assertion is plain. They flee away in rapid flight from men of taste, because such are not easy dupes, and they catch in their nets nothing but rustics.[2] Their much-talked-of humility is a misunderstanding of a saying of Plato. "God, as the old tradition declares, holding in His hand the beginning, middle, and end of all that is, moves according to His nature in a straight line towards the accomplishment of His end. Justice always follows Him, and is the punisher of those who fall short of the divine law. To that law he who would be happy holds fast, and follows it in all humility and order."[3] But the humility which he inculcates does not consist in casting one's self on the ground with bended knees, putting on the dress of men in misery, and sprinkling the head with ashes.[4] Jesus said, "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven." What is this but a corruption of the saying of Plato, "For a man to be at once rich in a high

[1] vi. 12. Plato, Apol., 20 D.
[2] vi. 14.
[3] Leg., iv. 715 E, 716 A (Jowett's translation).
[4] vi. 15.

degree and good in a high degree is impossible"?[1] The accounts given by the Christians abut the kingdom of God are not to be compared with the sayings of Plato in his Epistles.[2] The theory held by some Christians of a supercelestial God beyond the heaven of the Jews, springs from misunderstanding a saying of Plato.[3] Plato speaks of a way for souls through the planets, to and from the earth.[4] The same thing is represented by the Persians in the mysteries of Mithras.[5] From the Persians they took their conception of the seven heavens.[6] Compared with those of the Persians, the Christian mysteries are silly and insane.[7] In a certain "diagram"[8] of theirs they introduce among other monstrous things one whom they

[1] vi. 16. Plato, Leg., v. 743 A.

[2] vi. 17, 18. Plato, Epis., ii. 312 E.

[3] vi. 19. Plato, Phædrus, 247 C.

[4] vi. 21. Spencer quotes Timæus, 41 E; Keim, Phædrus, 247 C, D.

[5] vi. 22. Celsus describes the symbol at length. It was meant to symbolise the revolution of the heavenly bodies. They used the figure of a ladder with high gates, seven in number, with an eighth gate above. These seven gates were formed of different metals, and were assigned to Kronos, to Zeus, to Ares, &c., whose varied characters were represented by the respective metals. This arrangement was not arbitrary, but in part determined by musical reasons.

[6] vi. 23.

[7] vi. 24.

[8] In regard to the nature and object of this diagram—which was in use among the Ophites—there is great diversity of opinion. Origen disclaims all responsibility for it, but had seen it: he agrees substantially with Celsus, but claims to possess a more detailed knowledge. Spencer (Annot., p. 76) thinks that, if it were extant, it would throw a flood of light on the early history of the Church. Matter (Histoire du Gnosticisme, vol. ii. pp. 406-436) gives an elaborate discussion of it, and tries to reproduce it (Plate iii.) He thinks that

call the accursed god. He well deserved execration, inasmuch as he cursed the serpent who introduced to the first man the knowledge of good and evil.[1] In all their pictures of the supercelestial world they give prominence to the tree of life and resurrection of flesh from the tree—on the ground, I suppose, that their teacher was nailed to the cross, and was a carpenter by trade. So that if He had been cast from a precipice, or thrust into a pit, or been strangled, or had been a shoemaker, or a stone-mason, or a worker in iron, then there would have been invented above the heavens the precipice of life, or the pit of resurrection, or the cord of immortality, or the blessed stone, or the iron of love, or holy leather! What old woman would not be ashamed to whisper such things when telling a fable to a child by way of lullaby?[2]

3. Many of their mysterious sayings are only magical formulas. I have seen in the possession of some presbyters of their creed barbarous books containing the names of demons and their jugglery; these presbyters promised nothing that was good and everything that would injure man.[3] I have known, too, one Dionysius,

Origen was describing the diagram from memory, and thus made mistakes. He holds that it was a part of the "mysteries" of the Ophites, and contained a symbolic summary of their doctrines. Salmon (Dictionary of Christian Biography, vol. iv. p. 84) thinks that it was not meant to illustrate anything, but was supposed to possess some magical virtue.

[1] vi. 25, 27, 28. Cf. Cyril con. Julian., iii. 93 D.

[2] vi. 34.

[3] vi. 39, 40.

an Egyptian musician, who told me that magic had a power over those who were uneducated and corrupt in life, but could not influence those given to philosophy.[1]

4. In their dense ignorance they have erred impiously in other ways. They have made an opponent to God, the devil—in Hebrew called Satan. Such statements are cast in a mortal mould, and it is irreverent to say that the Most High God is opposed by one who thwarts His desire to benefit mankind. The Son of God, too, foretold that Satan would appear with great display, and claim for himself the glory of God, and warned His disciples against giving heed to him. Clearly the language of a sorcerer who wishes to anticipate and counteract opposition to his views. Their belief in the adversary of God springs from a misinterpretation of the Greek tradition of a war of the gods. Heraclitus, for example, speaks of a period of universal conflict—saying that all things are born and developed in strife. Pherecydes, who was older than he, tells of opposing armies—one under the leadership of Kronos, one under Ophioneus. Of like mystic import are the wars of the Titans and giants against the gods, and also what the Egyptians tell about Typhon, Horus, and Osiris. The words of Zeus to Hera[2] are to be interpreted as the words of Zeus to matter—as indicating that God laid hold of matter in a state of chaos and bound it by fixed laws. Accord-

[1] vi. 41. [2] Homer, Iliad, xv. 18-24.

ing to the Christians, the Son of God is vanquished by the devil, and teaches us thereby to endure when we too are punished by him. How ridiculous! Better to punish the devil, and not threaten the men whom he deceives.[1]

5. They have derived the conception of a Son of God in the same way. The men of old called this world, as having been born of God, His son.[2] Whatever may be the true theory of the origin of the world, it is certain that their cosmogony is extremely silly.[3] Take the separate days of their account. When the heaven had not yet been formed or the earth consolidated, or the sun begun its course, how could there be days?[4] The Creator is represented as asking for light—"Let there be light." Surely he did not require to ask light from above, like men who light their torches at those of their neighbours. If the Creator was opposed to the Great God, why did the latter lend him the light?[5] (Whether the world was uncreated and indestructible, or created but indestructible, or the reverse, I do not now discuss.[6]) When He gave the Creator the Spirit, did He not know that He was giving it to one who was evil and might work against Him?[7]

[1] vi. 42.
[2] vi. 47.
[3] vi. 49, 50. Cf. Cyril con. Julian., iii. 96 C, D.
[4] vi. 60.
[5] vi. 51.
[6] Elsewhere, according to Origen, he had said that the world was uncreated and indestructible—iv. 79.
[7] vi. 52.

Why, then, does He send secretly and destroy the works of the Creator? Why does He teach the followers of another to run away from their master? Why adopt them without their father's consent? A God of great majesty truly, who desires to be the father of those condemned by another, sinners and portionless, but yet who cannot get hold of and punish His messenger who revolted against Him![1] The conflicts of the Supreme God and the Creator are like the battle of the quails: the fathers, being useless through old age, take no part in the conflict, but allow their sons to do the fighting.[2]

6. If, however, as others among you say, this world be the work of the Highest God Himself, why does He create evil? Why is He unable to persuade and admonish? Why does He repent because of unthankful and wicked creatures? Why does He blame His own workmanship and threaten and destroy His own offspring? Or whither does He withdraw them from the world which He Himself has made?[3]

7. Look at their record of creation. Is it not absurd to speak of the First and Greatest God giving command, "Let this be done, or let that be done"—doing so much work on the second day, so much on the third day, and so on? And after the six days' work, like a very poor workman He is worn out and needs leisure to rest Himself![4] It is impiety to suppose that the

[1] vi. 53. [2] vi. 74. [3] vi. 53. [4] vi. 60.

Great God is weary, or works with His hands, or issues commands.[1] He has neither voice nor mouth, nor has He anything of those things which we know.[2] Nor did He make man in His image, for God is not such as man, nor is He like any other form, for He has no part in outward shape, or colour, or movement, or substance.[3] Of Him are all things: He cannot be expressed by word. He has suffered nothing that can be apprehended by name, and is outside of all suffering.[4]

8. "How, then," you cry, "am I to know God and learn the way to Him? You cast darkness before my eyes, and I see nothing clearly." One always fancies that he is blinded, who is led out of darkness into brilliant light.[5] Your answer is—that, since God is great and difficult to behold, He has put His own Spirit into a body like unto ours, and sent Him down hither that we might be able to hear and learn from Him.[6] But if the Spirit sent from God is the Son in a human body, this very Son of God would not be immortal. For such a Spirit could not abide for ever: God must have given up the ghost! Jesus therefore could not rise with His body; for God would not have taken back the Spirit which He had given, after it had been soiled through the nature of the body.[7] Again, if God wished to send down His Spirit, what need was there to breathe it into a woman? Knowing

[1] vi. 61. [2] vi. 62. [3] vi. 63, 64. [4] vi. 65.
[5] vi. 66. [6] vi. 69. [7] vi. 72.

already how to create men, He might have formed a body round about His own Spirit, instead of casting it into so great pollution. If He had been fashioned in this way immediately from above, He would not have met with so much unbelief.[1] Further, since He was a Divine Spirit in a human body, His body must have been in all respects different from the rest of bodies in size, or beauty, or strength, or voice, or majesty, or power to persuade. But the body of Jesus, it is said, differed not a whit from another, but on the contrary was small, plain, and ignoble.[2]

9. There is another objection. If God, like Zeus in the comedy, wakened up after a long sleep, and wished to save the race of men from evils, why did He send this spirit of His into one corner? Would it not have been better to breathe it into many bodies at once, and send it through the whole world? The comic poet sought to create a laugh by representing Zeus, when he awoke, as sending Hermes to the Athenians and Lacedæmonians. Is it not more absurd that a Son of God should be sent to the Jews, an utterly corrupt race, instead of to some inspired nation like the Chaldeans, the Egyptians, the Persians, or Indians?[3] Yet this God, who knows all things, did not know that He was sending His

[1] vi. 73.

[2] *τοῦτο δὲ οὐδὲν ἄλλου διέφερεν, ἀλλ', ὥς φασι, μικρὸν καὶ δυσειδὲς καὶ ἀγενὲς ἦν*—vi. 75.

[3] vi. 78, 80. Cf. Cyril con. Julian., v. 176 B, C.

Son to men who were evil, and about to punish Him![1]

10. Let us see what their defence is. Those who introduce another God have none; those who admit only one and the same God have this sapient answer —these things must needs be so because they were long ago predicted.[2] The oracles of the Pythian priestess, of Dodona, and thousands of others at whose instance the whole earth has been colonised, are despised by them; but those things that were said, or not said, by Jewish seers, in a fashion that is still practised in Phœnicia and Palestine, are considered marvellous and most unerring.[3]

11. To begin with, there are many forms of prophecy. Many persons of no note prophesy on the slightest occasion, without the least difficulty, both in temples and outside of them; others frequent cities or camps, and are moved, forsooth, as if delivering oracles. And this is the ready and familiar watchword of all—"I am God, or the Son of God, or the Divine Spirit. I am come, for the world is perishing, and you men are perishing because of your iniquities. I wish to save you, and you will see me again returning with heavenly power. Blessed shall he be who now worships me, but upon all others will I cast

[1] vi. 81.

[2] ἐκεῖνο δὴ τὸ σοφὸν, ὅτι ἐχρῆν οὕτω γενέσθαι· τεκμήριον δὲ, πάλαι γὰρ ταῦτα προείρητο—vii. 2.

[3] vii. 3.

eternal fire. And men who do not know the punishment in store for them will then repent and groan in vain, but those who obey me will I preserve for ever." To this they add insane and obscure sayings, the meaning of which no man of sense can discern, but every fool or impostor interprets them as he wills.[1] I have often heard such prophets, and when I confuted them they always acknowledged their defects.[2]

12. In the prophetic writings on which their system rests, God is represented as doing that which is wicked, shameful, and impure. He is said to act and to suffer most disgracefully, and to be the minister of evil. For God to eat the flesh of sheep, or drink vinegar, is no better than to feed on ordure.[3] Suppose that the prophets had predicted that the Great God—not to put it coarsely—would be a slave, or be sick, or die, must we believe that God died, or was sick, or a slave, because it was so predicted? Must He die that we may believe in His divinity? The prophets could not have foretold things so evil and unholy. Moreover, the question is not whether it has been predicted or not, but whether the work is worthy of God, and beautiful. We must disbelieve what is disgraceful, though all men in a common madness seem to predict it.[4] Is it

[1] vii. 9. [2] vii. 11. [3] vii. 12, 13.

[4] *τῷ δ' αἰσχρῷ καὶ κακῷ, κἂν πάντες ἄνθρωποι μαινόμενοι προλέγειν δοκῶσιν, ἀπιστητέον*—vii. 14.

pious to regard what Jesus did and suffered as worthy of God?[1]

13. Will they not consider this point? If the prophets of the God of the Jews predicted the coming of His Son, why did He enjoin them by Moses to acquire riches and power, to fill the earth, and by example and threatenings exhort them to slay their enemies, even to the youngest, while His Son, the Nazarene, declares that there is no access to His Father for the rich man, or the lover of power, riches, or glory; that we should have no more anxiety about food than the ravens, and less care for clothing than the lilies; and that we should give to him who has struck once, the opportunity to strike again? Has Moses or Jesus lied? Or did the Father, on sending Him, forget the commands which He had given to Moses? Or, changing His mind, did He condemn His own laws, and send a messenger to proclaim the opposite?[2]

14. All their religious conceptions are outward and material. They say that God is of a bodily nature, and has a body in form like that of a man.[3] Material, too, is their conception of eternal life. Ask to what place they are departing, or what hope they have, and they answer—"To another land better than this." Divine men of old told of a happy life for happy souls, to be passed in the "isles of the blest," or in the Elysian plains of which Homer

[1] Idem. [2] vii. 18. Cf. Cyril con. Julian., ix. 319 D, E. [3] vii. 27.

speaks.[1] Plato taught that the soul was immortal, and expressly calls the place where it is sent "earth." "The earth is very vast, and we who dwell in the region extending from the river Phasis to the Pillars of Heracles, inhabit a small section only on the borders of the sea, like ants or frogs about a marsh, and there are other inhabitants of many like other places. For I should say that in all parts of the earth there are hollows of various forms and sizes, into which the water, and the mist, and the lower air collect; and that the true earth is pure, and in the pure heaven."[2] To understand this saying of Plato, we must understand what he adds—that we through weakness and sluggishness are not able to pass to the surface of the air; but that if our nature could sustain the sight, we would recognise that to be the true heaven and the true light.[3] Just as they have perverted the teaching of Plato in regard to this, so have they come to believe in the resurrection of the body through misunderstanding the doctrine of metempsychosis.[4] When they are pressed hard and refuted, they go back to the same question—"How then shall we know and see God? And how shall we go to Him?"[5] They expect to see God with the bodily eye, to hear His voice with their ears, and to touch Him with sensible hands. Let them go, then, to the shrines of

[1] Odyss., iv. 563. [2] vii. 28. Phædo, 109 A, B.
[3] vii. 31. Phædo, 109 D, E (Jowett). [4] vii. 32. [5] vii. 33.

Trophonius or Mopsus. There they will see gods in human form, not deceptive but manifest; they will see them not once only, and slipping past them, like Him who seduced them, but always holding intercourse with those who desire it.[1] "But how, then, can we know God without sensible perception? What can be learned without perception?" That is the utterance not of a man, nor of a soul, but of flesh. If a race so craven and carnal can understand anything, let them give ear. Give up your outward vision and look upwards with your mind; turn aside from the eye of the flesh and raise the eye of the soul: only so will you see God. And if you seek a guide, you must shun vagabonds and jugglers who recommend their phantoms; you must not blaspheme as idols those who prove themselves to be gods, while you worship one who is not even an idol, but truly a dead man, and seek out a father like unto Him.[2] For such a delusion, and for the sake of the divine doorkeepers[3] whose names you so painfully learn, you are miserably plagued and crucified.[4] Instead of such guides, seek divinely inspired poets and wise men and philosophers.[5] Listen to Plato, a master in theological

[1] vii. 34, 35.

[2] μηδὲ εἴδωλον ἔτι, ἀλλ' ὄντως νεκρὸν σέβοντες, καὶ πατέρα ὅμοιον αὐτῷ ζητοῦντες—vii. 36.

[3] Probably referring (so Keim) to the "diagram" of the Ophites. Spencer refers to the angels who presided over the 365 "local positions," according to Basilides—Iren., i. 23.

[4] κακῶς δαιμονᾶτε καὶ ἀνασκολοπίζεσθε—vii. 40.

[5] vii. 41.

questions: "To find out the Maker and Father of the universe is a hard task, and when we have found Him it is impossible to speak of His nature to all men."[1] See how divine men seek after the way of truth. By synthesis, or analysis, or analogy, they try to give to us some intelligible conception of Him who is the first and unspeakable. If I sought to teach you, who are so bound up in the flesh, and see nothing that is pure, I wonder if you could follow me.[2] Distinguish essence which is intelligible from becoming which is visible. With essence is truth, with becoming is error. Around truth is science, around becoming is opinion. There is an intellection of the intellectual, and a vision of the visible. The intelligence knows the intellectual, and the eye the visible. What the sun is among visible things (which is neither the eye nor sight, but gives to the eye the power to see, and to sight existence, and to the things of sight visibility, and to all the objects of sense becoming, and is at the same time the cause of its own visibility), that among things intellectual is he who is neither intelligence, nor intellection, nor science, but gives to intelligence power to perceive, to intellection existence, to science the power to know, to all intellectual things, to truth itself, to essence itself, the possibility of existing, while he himself is above all things, and yet becomes intelligible by a certain ineffable power.[3]

[1] Plato, Tim., 28 C. [2] vii. 42. [3] Cf. Plato, Respub., 507-509.

These things are spoken to men of intelligence. The Spirit whom you represent as having come down from God is really the spirit which inspired wise men of old. If you understand anything of these truths, it is well; if not, be silent and conceal your ignorance, and do not speak of those who see as blind, and those who run as lame, while it is you who are altogether lame and mutilated in soul, and live only in the body—that is, with that which is dead.[1]

15. Since you had a passion for something novel, why did you not give your homage to some one of the illustrious dead, who might have been a fitting subject for a divine legend? If Heracles, Asclepius, and the ancient worthies did not satisfy you, you had Orpheus, a man acknowledged to possess a divine spirit, and who also died a death of violence. But perhaps others had taken him up before you. Or you might have had Anaxarchus, who, when cast into a mortar and cruelly crushed, showed a lofty contempt for the punishment—"Beat, beat the shell of Anaxarchus; him you are not beating,"—the saying of a truly divine spirit. But some physicists have anticipated you in his case. What do you say to Epictetus? When his master kept twisting his leg, he smiling said, "You are breaking it;" and when he had broken it, said, "Did I not tell you that you

[1] vii. 45.

were breaking it?" Did your God say anything so noble when He was being punished? You pass by these, and the Sibyl also, and you set up as a God a man who crowned an infamous life by a most pitiable death.[1] Why not have taken Jonah in the whale's body or Daniel in the den of lions, or characters more miraculous than these?[2] Perhaps you will quote, in opposition to these statements, the precept of Jesus against the avenging of insult. That is an old saying; it is only a rude rendering of what Plato said with elegance. "Then we must do no wrong? Certainly not. Nor when injured, injure in return, as the many imagine; for we must injure no one at all? Clearly not. Again, Crito, may we do evil? Surely not, Socrates. And what of doing evil in return for evil, which is the morality of the many—is that just or not? Not just. For doing evil to another is the same as injuring him? Very true. Then we ought not to retaliate or render evil for evil to any one, whatever evil we may have suffered from him. . . . Tell me, then, whether you agree with and assent to my first principle, that neither injury, nor retaliation, nor warding off evil by evil, is ever right? And shall that be the premiss of our argument? Or do you decline and dissent from this? For this I

[1] *τὸν δὲ βίῳ μὲν ἐπιῤῥητοτάτῳ, θανάτῳ δὲ οἰκτίστῳ χρησάμενον, θεὸν τίθεσθε*—vii. 53.

[2] Idem.

have ever thought and still think."[1] Any inquirer will easily find many such illustrations.[2]

III.—1. Let us pass to another point. They cannot endure temples, altars, and images. In this the Scythians, the nomads of Syria, and all impious and lawless nations, are at one with them. So are the Persians, according to Herodotus. Heraclitus says that it is foolish to pray to images without recognising what gods or heroes are. But they utterly despise images. If their reason be that stone or brass wrought by human hands is not a god, that is ridiculous wisdom. Who but an absolute idiot considers them as gods, and not things dedicated to and statues of gods? If their reason be that they are not truly divine images, as the form of the Deity is different, they unconsciously refute themselves when they say that God made man the image of Himself, and with a form like unto Himself. They regard statues as consecrated not to gods but demons, and hold that the worshipper of God ought not to serve demons;[3] while they themselves worship one who is neither a god nor a demon, but a dead man.[4] I ask, why are demons not to be worshipped? Are not all things administered according to the will and providence of God? Is not the work of demons or heroes ruled by the law of the Most High? Has

[1] Crito, 49 B, C, D (Jowett). [2] vii. 58.
[3] vii. 62. [4] Cf. Cyril con. Julian., vi. 194 D.

not power been allotted to each as he was deemed worthy? And does not the worshipper of God rightly serve one who has obtained power from Him? No, they say; it is not possible to serve many masters.[1]

2. That is the language of revolt,—of those who separate themselves from the rest of men. Those who speak thus ascribe their own affections to God. Among men, he that serves one master cannot well serve another without wronging the former; but this cannot be applied to God, whom no injury nor pain can touch. On the contrary, he who serves any one of those gods or demons in the universe who belong to the Great God, does not grieve God but pleases Him: to honour what is His is to honour Himself.[2] To say in speaking of God that one is called Lord, is to divide the kingdom of heaven and introduce faction, as if there were some other leader opposed to Him.[3] Their position would be stronger if they themselves worshipped no other than the one God;[4] but now they worship Him who but recently appeared on earth.[5] Nay, even if you taught them that it is not His Son but the Father of all whom we ought truly to reverence, they would insist on the leader of their faction being associated along with Him; and Him they called Son of God, not because of their intense rev-

[1] vii. 68. [2] viii. 2. [3] viii. 11.
[4] Cf. Cyril con. Julian., v. 159 E; vi. 201 E.
[5] *τὸν ἔναγχος φανέντα*—viii. 12. Cf. Cyril con. Julian., vi. 191 D.

erence for God, but from an intense desire to exalt Jesus.[1] To show that I am not speaking in an aimless fashion, let me refer to a passage in the 'Heavenly Dialogue.' "If the Son is more powerful than God the Father, and the Son of man is His Lord, who but the Son of man can be Lord of the God who is governor of the universe?"[2]

3. They seek to avoid altars, images, and temples: that is the distinctive covenant of their secret and mysterious fellowship.[3] Why such avoidance? God is common to all; He is good, has need of nothing, and is free from envy: what hinders those devoted to Him from taking part in the public festivals?[4] If idols are nothing, where is the evil? If they are demons, manifestly they belong to God; it is our duty, therefore, to offer sacrifices to them according to the laws, and pray for their favour.[5] If, in accordance with national tradition, they abstain from such victims, why not abstain from the flesh of all living creatures whatsoever? If they refrain lest they should eat along with demons, I admire their wisdom in that they have so slowly learned that they are always eating with demons. They are on their guard against

[1] *οὐχ ὅτι τὸν θεὸν σφόδρα σέβουσιν, ἀλλ' ὅτι τοῦτον σφόδρα αὔξουσιν* —viii. 14.

[2] viii. 15. Of this Gnostic production, which seems to have come from the school of Marcion, nothing is known. Keim (p. 123) thinks that it belonged to the Ophites.

[3] *ἀφανοῦς καὶ ἀπορρήτου κοινωνίας οἴεται εἶναι σύνθημα*—viii. 17.

[4] viii. 21.

[5] viii. 24.

this only in the case of sacrificial victims, forgetting that, whenever they eat bread, or drink wine, or taste fruit, or even touch the water or breathe the air, they are indebted to some demon, to whom these things have been severally allotted.[1] We ought then not to live at all, nor to have come into this world; or having come, we ought to give thanks to the demons, and offer them first-fruits and prayers that they may be friendly and beneficent. If an earthly satrap or governor, or even an official of lower position, can injure those who treat him with disrespect, shall the satraps and administrators of the air and the earth be powerless to injure when they are insulted?[2]

4. "See," they cry, "I stand by the statue of Zeus or Apollo, or any god whatsoever: I blaspheme it, I buffet it, and it takes no vengeance on me!"[3] Is not your own demon not only blasphemed, but banished from every land and sea?[4] And are not you, who are consecrated to Him like statues, bound and led away and crucified, while your Son of God in no way takes vengeance?[5] You abuse their statues, but if you had insulted Dionysus in person you would not have got off with impunity. Those who tortured and punished your God have suffered no harm in consequence; nor, in the long period that has since elapsed,

[1] viii. 28. [2] viii. 33. [3] viii. 38.

[4] *οὐχ ὁρᾷς οὖν, ὦ βέλτιστε, ὅτι καὶ τὸν σὸν δαίμονα καταστάς τις οὐ βλασφημεῖ μόνον ἀλλὰ καὶ πάσης γῆς καὶ θαλάσσης ἐκκηρύττει*—viii. 39.

[5] Idem.

has anything been done to indicate that He was not an impostor and a man, but a Son of God. He who sent His Son, paid no heed to the cruel punishment which He endured, nor to His images that perished along with Him, and for so many years continued unconcerned. Was ever father so unnatural? "But He," you say, "willed what happened, and so was outraged." A like rejoinder may be made by those whom you blaspheme and revile. But, in truth, they inflict very severe punishment on those who blaspheme them, so that they flee and hide themselves or are taken prisoners and perish.[1] Why recount all the oracles that were delivered, partly by prophets and prophetesses, partly by other inspired men and women? Why talk of the wonderful announcements that have come from the inner shrine—of the revelations given through sacrifice or other miraculous symbols? Apparitions of the gods have plainly appeared to some. The whole world is full of them. How many cities have been established through oracles! How many have miserably perished through neglecting them! How many colonies have been founded and have flourished in obedience to their orders! How many princes, how many private individuals, have fared well or ill in consequence! How many childless ones have gained their desire! How many have escaped the

[1] *σφόδρα ἀμύνονται τὸν βλασφημοῦντα, ἤτοι φεύγοντα διὰ τοῦτο καὶ κρυπτόμενον, ἢ ἁλισκόμενον καὶ ἀπολλύμενον*—viii. 41.

wrath of demons, how many lame have been cured! How many guilty of sacrilege have been punished on the spot—some by loss of reason, some by being driven to lay hands on themselves, some by incurable disease! Nay, some have been killed by a terrible voice from the inner shrine.[1]

5. The belief in eternal punishments is not peculiar to you; it is held by those who initiate into and interpret the sacred rites. The punishments with which you threaten others, they threaten you. Both parties contend with vigour for their own views; your opponents bring forward better evidence for their claims. You contend even unto death rather than forswear your teaching.[2] Your obstinacy does not exempt you from being classed with robbers, who are justly punished for their crimes.[3] How ridiculous to cherish the desire and hope that your body will rise again, as if it were so very precious, and yet cause it to be punished as if it were worthless! It is not worth while to discourse with men who believe this, so closely attached to the body, boorish and impure. I speak to those who hope that the soul or understanding (whatever name you may employ to designate its nature or origin)[4] will enjoy eternal life with God. They rightly hold that those who lived well will be happy, and that the

[1] viii. 45. [2] viii. 48. [3] viii. 54.

[4] *εἴτε πνεῦμα νοερὸν, ἅγιον καὶ μακάριον, εἴτε ψυχὴν ζῶσαν, εἴτε θείας καὶ ἀσωμάτου φύσεως ἔκγονον ὑπερουράνιόν τε καὶ ἄφθαρτον*—viii. 49.

unjust will suffer everlasting punishment; and from this dogma let no one swerve, but continue steadfast thereto.[1]

6. Since men have been attached to a body (whether for the sake of the economy of the universe, or that they may pay the penalty of sins, or by reason of the soul being oppressed with certain affections until it is purified at the appointed periods), we must believe that they are intrusted to certain keepers of this prison-house.[2] They must then in reason choose one of two things. If they will not give the homage that is due to the demons in charge of these matters, let them cease to become men, or marry, or have children, or do anything whatever in life, but go out of it as speedily as possible, leaving no seed behind. But if they will marry, and partake of the good things in this life, and endure its appointed evils (for nature wills that all men should experience evils here), let them not be ungrateful and unjust, but render to the demons their due.[3] The Egyptians tell us that the body is divided into thirty-six different parts, each of which is in charge of a separate demon, whose names they give.[4] Why should we not propitiate these and others, if we desire rather to be in health than in sickness, to be fortunate rather than unfortunate,

[1] *τούτου δὲ τοῦ δόγματος . . . μηδείς ποτε ἀποστῇ*—viii. 49.

[2] *παραδέδονταί τισιν ἐπιμεληταῖς τοῦδε τοῦ δεσμωτηρίου*—viii. 53.

[3] viii. 55.

[4] *E.g.*, Χνουμὴν, Χναχουμὴν, Κνὰτ, Σικὰτ, &c.

and as far as possible to be free from torture and punishments?[1]

7. It is necessary, however, to take care lest by close association with them we become lovers of the body and forgetful of higher things. Perhaps we ought not to lose faith in the wise men who say that terrestrial demons are for the most part dissolved in sensual pleasures, hold tenaciously to blood, are devoted to odours and songs and other things of that sort, and have no higher power than that of healing the body and of foretelling the destiny of men and cities, and of influencing human concerns generally.[2] We must sacrifice to them so far as it is expedient: to do more is opposed to the dictates of reason.[3] It is better to hold that the demons are in want of nothing, but take pleasure in those who show piety towards them. We must never in any way neglect God, neither by day nor night, in public nor in private, neither in word nor deed; in working and in repose let the soul be continually directed to God.

8. Since these things are so, what grievous wrong is there in propitiating the powers here, both the demons and especially the princes and kings of men, as the latter have not achieved dignity without demonic authority?[4] If, however, any worshipper of God be commanded to act impiously, or say anything unholy, he must endure torture and death rather than obey. To sing praises

[1] viii. 58. [2] viii. 60. [3] viii. 62. [4] viii. 63.

to the sun or Athena is not impiety but rather shows reverence to the Great God; for the more numerous the objects of reverence, the more perfect the piety.[1] In like manner, to swear by any earthly king is not at all grievous; for to his charge have earthly affairs been intrusted, and whatever you receive in life you receive from him.[2] We ought not to disbelieve the old saying, "One only is king, he to whom the son of crafty Kronos has given it."[3] If you seek to overturn this dogma, the king will with good reason take vengeance upon you. For if all were to do as you do, he would be left alone, and barbarians the most lawless and rude would come into power and rule, and the glory of your worship as well as of true wisdom among men would be lost.[4] You will not dare to say that if the Romans give up their recognised duties to gods and men, and worship your Most High (or by whatever name you invoke Him), He will come down and fight for them, and that they will require no other strength. For the same God, according to you, formerly promised much greater things to those who worshipped Him, and you see the issue of His favours. So far from being masters of the whole world, the Jews have not a plot of ground or a home;[5] and if any one of you

[1] viii. 66.

[2] *δέδοται γὰρ τούτῳ τὰ ἐπὶ γῆς· καὶ ὅ τι ἂν λαμβάνῃς ἐν τῷ βίῳ, παρὰ τούτου λαμβάνεις*—viii. 67.

[3] Iliad, ii. 205.

[4] viii. 68.

[5] Cf. Cyril con. Julian., vi. 209 D, E; 210 A.

Christians wanders about secretly, he is sought out and put to death.[1] It is intolerable that you should say that if, by obeying you, the present rulers are taken captive, you will persuade their successors, and all their successors in turn, to meet with the same disasters—unless some power shall arise, which, foreseeing the issue, will utterly destroy you before it is itself destroyed.[2] If indeed it were possible that all the inhabitants of Asia and Europe and Libya—Greek and barbarians alike—to the very ends of the earth, were to agree to the same law;—but why discuss such a hypothesis? He who regards this as possible knows nothing.[3] Aid, then, the king with all your power, work along with him in what is just, fight for him, march into battle with him if need be, and act as his generals.[4] Take part in ruling your country, if it be necessary to do this also for the preservation of the laws and religion.[5]

With this appeal to the Christians to act the part of loyal citizens, which the reader, according to his bias, will interpret as the impassioned utterance of a burning patriotism or the savage irony of bitter hostility, the 'True Word' comes to a close.

[1] viii. 69.

[2] viii. 71.

[3] Εἰ γὰρ δὴ οἷόν τε εἰς ἕνα συμφρονῆσαι νόμον τοὺς τὴν Ἀσίαν καὶ Εὐρώπην καὶ Λιβύην κατοικοῦντας, Ἕλληνάς τε καὶ βαρβάρους, ἄχρι περάτων νενεμημένους—ἀδύνατον τοῦτο νομίσας εἶναι· ἐπιφέρει, ὅτι δ τοῦτο οἰόμενος οἶδεν οὐδέν—viii. 72.

[4] viii. 73.

[5] viii. 75.

CHAPTER III.

THE CULTURE OF CELSUS.

Apart altogether from its refutation by Origen, the work of Celsus, who, though an unsympathetic was a fair and thorough inquirer, is indirectly a valuable contribution to the history of Christian thought and life in the second century. To a philosopher who was a hostile critic, questions of government and organisation were of little interest, partly because they furnished no scope for attack; and hence, with the exception of a passing reference to the "Great Church," and an uncomplimentary allusion to certain presbyters, he sheds no light on such problems. But nowhere else do we see so clearly what it was in Christianity that aroused the hostility of the State, the opposition of the philosophers, and the fanatical attacks of the populace; nowhere else do we find such unbiassed evidence for the source and nature of Christian dogmas, and for the facts and teaching recorded in the Gospels. The greater and more

minute his knowledge of the principles of Christianity, the more important is the place occupied by his work in the history of Apologetics. What, then, did Celsus know of the sacred books of the Christians? In particular, what, according to him, were the distinctive dogmas of the Christians in his age, and from what source were they drawn?

I. Regarding the accuracy and extent of his knowledge of the Old Testament Scriptures, it is impossible to speak with confidence. He is fully cognisant of the claims of the Jews to be regarded as a chosen people, specially beloved of God, to whom a revelation had been granted which gave their Scriptures a unique character;[1] of the general tenor of the teaching of Moses and the prophets,[2] of the promises of material prosperity given to Israel,[3] and of the place and characteristics of the Messianic hope in the national life.[4] An interested observer of the conflict between Christianity and Judaism as represented by the system of Marcion, he knows the distinctive tenets of Judaism both in their affinity and in their apparent antagonism to Christian doctrine;[5] a careful reader of the Gospel of St Matthew, and a student of Messianic literature,[6] he must have been familiar with the Messianic prophecies, if not in their context, at least in the form of numerous quotations from the

[1] v. 41; iv. 31. [2] vii. 18; iv. 71; vii. 12, 13; vi. 50.
[3] vii. 18. [4] ii. 29. [5] vi. 51, 52, 74; v. 59. [6] iv. 52.

various prophetic books. He shows a detailed knowledge of the Book of Genesis from the first chapter to the last;[1] and from his minute and verbal criticism[2] of the Mosaic cosmogony it is plain that he has read the Septuagint. He has read the Book of Exodus.[3] So much is certain; but little or nothing else can be established. He may have known the Book of Isaiah or Micah.[4] There is a possible allusion to the Book of Job or Zechariah.[5] He has read the Books of Daniel and Jonah, at least those sections which he regarded as legendary.[6] He quotes, without naming it, the Book of Enoch as an authoritative Christian scripture.[7]

When we turn from the Old Testament to the New Testament, we are on more certain ground. The Christians, we learn from Celsus, were worshippers of one Jesus, who had appeared but a few years before,[8] whom they believed to be the Son of God,[9] the Word,[10] very God.[11] He was held to be God in such a sense that Celsus could argue that the whole universe would

[1] Cf. Gen. i., ii., with i. 19; iv. 23; v. 50, 51, 59; vi. 29, 47, 50, 51, 60, 61, 63; vii. 62: Gen. iii. with vi. 28, 42; iv. 36: Gen. vii., viii., with i. 19; iv. 21, 41: Gen. xi. with iv. 21: Gen. xviii., xxvii., with iv. 43: Gen. xxx., xxxi., xxvi., with iv. 44: Gen. xix. with iv. 45: Gen. xxvii., xxxiv., xxxvii., with iv. 46: Gen. xl., xli., xlvii., l., with iv. 47.

[2] Cf. Gen. i. 26: *ποιήσωμεν ἄνθρωπον κατ' εἰκόνα ἡμετέραν*, with *ὅταν φῶσιν ὅτι ὁ θεὸς ἐποιήσε τὸν ἄνθρωπον ἰδίαν εἰκόνα*—vii. 62. Cf. vi. 63.

[3] i. 22, 24; vii. 18; vi. 47. [4] vi. 55. [5] vi. 42.
[6] vii. 53. [7] v. 52. [8] i. 26; viii. 12, 14; vi. 10; ii. 4.
[9] i. 26. [10] ii. 31. [11] iv. 2; iii. 41, 42.

be thrown into disorder by His descent to earth.[1] He came down to earth for the salvation of sinners.[2] The disciples regarded Him as a Saviour—the Son of the Most High.[3] In books which were written by His disciples,[4] it was declared that He was conceived by the Spirit of God[5] in the womb of a Jewish woman, who, though poor, was held to be of royal descent.[6] The suspicions of her husband, who was a carpenter,[7] were dispelled by the visit of an angel.[8] At His birth Chaldeans came from the East under divine inspiration, and by their questioning excited the suspicion of Herod, who, in alarm, slew all the children that had been born at the same time.[9] By the visit of another angel His kindred were warned, and fled with Him to Egypt.[10] He returned from Egypt,[11] wrought as a carpenter,[12] was called the Nazarene.[13] At His baptism it was averred on His own authority, and that of one who was punished along with Him, that the Spirit appeared in the form of a dove,[14] and that a voice from heaven was heard adopting Him as the Son of God.[15] It was alleged that He healed the blind and the lame, multiplied loaves, and raised the dead.[16] Accompanied by ten or eleven publicans and sailors, He went up and down

[1] iv. 5.
[2] iv. 1 ; iii. 62.
[3] ii. 9.
[4] ii. 13, 16, 49, 74.
[5] vi. 69, 73.
[6] ii. 32.
[7] i. 28.
[8] v. 52.
[9] i. 58.
[10] v. 52 ; i. 66.
[11] i. 28.
[12] vi. 34.
[13] vii. 18.
[14] i. 40.
[15] i. 41 ; ii. 72.
[16] i. 68 ; ii. 48.

the country, living meanly,[1] preaching everywhere.[2] He spoke with authority, and in opposition to the religious beliefs of His age.[3] He spoke of the kingdom of heaven,[4] giving prominence to the virtues of humility and faith,[5] to the doctrines of the resurrection of the dead,[6] and a judgment to come.[7] He predicted that He would suffer and die and rise again;[8] that one disciple would betray and another deny Him.[9] He ate and drank with His disciples.[10] On the eve of His sufferings He prayed passionately that the cup would pass from Him.[11] He was taken prisoner,[12] and treated with ignominy before His judges.[13] They put on Him in mockery a purple robe, on His head they put a crown of thorns, and in His hand a reed.[14] He was crucified.[15] On the cross He thirsted.[16] As He expired, He cried out with a loud voice; an earthquake and thick darkness emphasised the catastrophe.[17] He was buried,[18] but He rose again. An angel of God rolled away the stone, and He came forth, showing Himself first to a frenzied woman, and afterwards to the disciples, to whom He displayed His pierced hands. To others than the disciples He did not show Himself.[19] The

[1] i. 62; ii. 46.
[2] ii. 70.
[3] ii. 7.
[4] i. 39; vi. 17.
[5] vi. 15; i. 9; vi. 10, 11.
[6] ii. 6; vii. 32.
[7] iv. 10; v. 14; vii. 9.
[8] ii. 15, 16, 44.
[9] ii. 18, 54.
[10] ii. 20.
[11] ii. 24.
[12] ii. 9; vi. 10.
[13] ii. 9, 34.
[14] ii. 34.
[15] vi. 34; vii. 53.
[16] iv. 22; ii. 37.
[17] ii. 55.
[18] iii. 43.
[19] ii. 55, 70; iii. 22.

Christians proclaimed in His own words that He would return again with heavenly power.[1]

The quotation of these passages may seem to render superfluous any discussion of the sources from which Celsus drew his information. He claimed to possess complete knowledge of Christian facts and dogmas derived from a study of their own writings.[2] These books contained a record of the words and deeds of Jesus,[3] and were written by His disciples.[4] He seems to regard these documents as based on an original writing—a Gospel—which had undergone and was undergoing repeated alterations at the hands of believers, in some cases at least from a dogmatic motive.[5] Were these documents our Gospels?

The testimony of Origen is contradictory. For the most part he takes for granted that Celsus had the Gospels before him. He accuses him of misquoting and mutilating them,[6] of wilfully ignoring certain passages,[7] of accepting arbitrarily one part and rejecting others,[8] and expressly says that Celsus has taken

[1] vii. 9.

[2] *ταῦτα μὲν οὖν ὑμῖν ἐκ τῶν ὑμετέρων συγγραμμάτων*—ii. 74.

[3] *τῇ αὐτοῦ φωνῇ διαῤῥήδην καθὰ καὶ ὑμεῖς συγγεγράφατε*—ii. 49.

[4] ii. 13, 16.

[5] *τίνας τῶν πιστευόντων ὡς ἐκ μέθης ἥκοντας εἰς τὸ ἐφεστάναι αὐτοῖς μεταχαράττειν ἐκ τῆς πρώτης γραφῆς τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τριχῇ καὶ τετραχῇ καὶ πολλαχῇ καὶ μεταπλάττειν ἵν' ἔχοιεν πρὸς τοὺς ἐλέγχους ἀρνεῖσθαι*—ii. 27. Tertullian accuses the Marcionites of constantly retouching their Gospel: "Nam et quotidie reformant illud prout a nobis quotidie revincuntur."—Adv. Marc., iv. 5.

[6] i. 13. [7] ii. 34. [8] ii. 61.

certain particulars from the Gospel of St Matthew, and perhaps from the rest of the Gospels.[1] But, on the other hand, he expresses a wish that all enemies of the faith were as ignorant as Celsus of the bare letter of Scripture,[2] and says that Celsus does not seem even to have read the Gospel accounts.[3] This parenthetical suggestion has no weight in the face of the other statements, and is only the passing thrust of a controversialist. We learn from Cyril[4] that one of the chief causes why the attack of Julian tended to unsettle the minds of believers was the seeming knowledge of Scripture which it displayed; and for a like reason Origen might be inclined to minimise the knowledge of the Gospels exhibited by Celsus. For there is ample evidence to prove that he had an accurate knowledge of the Gospel of St Matthew, some knowledge of St Mark and St Luke, and also of the fourth Gospel.

Celsus was aware of the existence of several Gospels, and had marked discrepancies in the narratives. Speaking of the angels who came to the tomb of Jesus, he says, "Some say one angel, some say two."[5] The plural form would seem to indicate that he recognised at least two authorities on each side. As St Matthew and St Mark speak of one, and St Luke and St John speak of two,[6] the natural conclusion seems to be that

[1] i. 40. [2] i. 49.

[3] εὐαγγελικοῖς λόγοις οὐς οὐδ' ἀνεγνωκέναι ὁ Κέλσος φαίνεται—i. 62.

[4] Cyril con. Jul., Præf., 4 A. [5] οἱ μὲν ἕνα, οἱ δε δύω—v. 52.

[6] Matt. xxviii. 2; Mark xvi. 5; Luke xxiv. 4; John xx. 12.

he was acquainted with all our canonical Gospels, unless there is evidence that he had access to other sources where similar statements were made.

He knew the Synoptic Gospels, and was most familiar with St Matthew. It is impossible to decide in many cases which of the Synoptics was in his hand, though from the prominent use he has made of St Matthew it is probable that we should refer them to the first Gospel.[1] All the incidents recorded in the first two chapters of St Matthew are known to Celsus.[2] From St Matthew he learned that Joseph was a carpenter.[3] Many of the circumstances which attended the passion of Jesus—the putting a reed in His hand,[4] the giving Him gall to drink,[5] the earthquake at the crucifixion,[6] the rolling away of the stone by an angel[7]—all of which are peculiar to St Matthew, are alluded to by Celsus. Moreover, a close comparison of the text makes it plain that in various passages which are common to

[1] Cf., *e.g.*, ii. 46 with Matt. iv. 18-22 ; Mark i. 16-20 ; Luke v. 2-11 : viii. 15, 68, with Matt. vi. 24 ; Luke xvi. 13 : i. 61 with Matt. viii. 20 ; Luke ix. 58 : ii. 46 with Matt. ix. 9, 10 ; Mark ii. 14, 15 ; Luke v. 29, 30 : i. 68 ; ii. 48 with Matt. ix. 23-26 ; Mark v. 35-39 ; Luke viii. 49-56 : ii. 49 ; vi. 42 with Matt. xii. 26 ; Mark iii. 23 ; Luke x. 18 : i. 68 with Matt. xiv. 15-21 ; Mark vi. 35-44 ; Luke ix. 12-17 : ii. 15, 16, 44, 54 with Matt. xvi. 21 ; Mark viii. 31 ; Luke ix. 21, 22 : i. 6 ; ii. 49 with Matt. xxiv. 24 ; Mark xiii. 21-23 : ii. 6 ; iv. 10 ; vii. 9 with Matt. xiii. 42, 43 ; xxv. 31-46 ; Mark ix. 43-48 : ii. 9, 18, 20 with Matt. xxvi. 20-25, 31-35 ; Mark xiv. 17-21, 27-31 ; Luke xxii. 34 : ii. 39 with Matt. xxvi. 56 ; Mark xiv. 50.

[2] i. 28 ; ii. 32 ; v. 52 ; i. 58, 66.

[3] ii. 32. Cf. Matt. xiii. 55.

[4] ii. 34. Cf. Matt. xxvii. 29.

[5] iv. 22. Cf. Matt. xxvii. 34.

[6] ii. 55. Cf. Matt. xxvii. 51.

[7] v. 52. Cf. Matt. xxviii. 2.

the Synoptic Gospels he has followed chiefly the text of St Matthew. This applies to the threatenings of Jesus,[1] to the saying about the camel going through the eye of a needle,[2] to the prayer of our Lord in Gethsemane,[3] to His being bound and led away.[4]

There is little evidence of a separate use by Celsus of the Gospel of St Mark. He alone records that Jesus was a carpenter.[5] This was known to Celsus. He declares that Jesus appeared first and alone to a half-frenzied woman. This is explicitly stated only in St Mark and St John.[6] If the closing verses of St Mark be spurious, he must have taken this appearance to Mary Magdalene from the fourth Gospel.

Celsus has several references to incidents and precepts which are clearly traceable to St Luke. He seems to allude to the sending of an angel to Mary;[7] he scoffs at her royal descent,[8] and at the carrying back the genealogy of Christ to the first man.[9] Either from St Luke[9] or St John[10] he has learned that Jesus after

[1] *οὐαὶ ὑμῖν, καὶ προλέγω ὑμῖν*—ii. 76. Cf. Matt. xi. 21, 24; and Luke x. 13-16. Celsus reads *προλέγω* for *πλὴν λέγω* in Matt.

[2] *διὰ τρυπήματος ῥαφίδος*—vi. 16. Cf. Matt. xix. 24, who uses the same word. Mark x. 25, Luke xviii. 25 read *τρυμαλιᾶς*.

[3] *ὦ πάτερ εἰ δύναται τὸ ποτήριον τοῦτο παρελθεῖν*—ii. 24. Cf. Matt. xxvi. 39 with Mark xiv. 36; Luke xxii. 42.

[4] *οὔτε δεθέντα ἀπάγεσθαι*—ii. 9. Cf. Matt. xxvii. 2: *καὶ δήσαντες αὐτὸν ἀπήγαγον*. Mark xv. 1: *δήσαντες . . . ἀπήνεγκαν*.

[5] Mark vi. 3. Origen was ignorant of this reading—vi. 34.

[6] Mark xvi. 9; John xx. 14-18.

[7] i. 66. Cf. Luke i. 26.

[8] ii. 32. Cf. Luke i. 27.

[9] ii. 32. Cf. Luke iii. 38.

[10] xxiv. 40.

[11] xx. 27.

His resurrection showed His pierced hands to the disciples. He has read in St Luke the saying of Jesus about the ravens.[1] The form in which he quotes the precept of Jesus with reference to not returning evil for evil suggests St Luke rather than St Matthew.[2]

The textual evidence for his use of the fourth Gospel is not so convincing and complete as that for his use of St Matthew, but is at least equal to that brought forward for his knowledge of St Mark and St Luke. He says that Jesus was challenged in the temple to establish His claims: that He was so challenged there is recorded only by St John.[3] Only in the fourth Gospel is it told that the Baptist saw the Spirit descend on Jesus at His baptism; Celsus knew that one who was punished like Jesus saw it.[4] Celsus often attacks the plea that Jesus was a voluntary sufferer—a truth in regard to which the testimony of St John is most emphatic.[5] He probably knew of the water and blood that came from the side of Christ.[6] St John alone speaks of Christ thirsting on the cross; Celsus taunts Him on this account with weakness.[7] He knows that the Christians believe Jesus to be the Absolute Word.[8] But the proof of the knowledge possessed by Celsus of

[1] vii. 18. Cf. Luke xii. 24.
[2] vii. 18, 58. Cf. Luke vi. 29, and Matt. v. 39.
[3] i. 57. Cf. John x. 24.
[4] i. 40. Cf. John i. 33.
[5] ii. 23; viii. 41. Cf. John x. 11, 17.
[6] ii. 36. Cf. John xix. 34.
[7] ii. 37. Cf. John xix. 28, 29.
[8] iii. 31. Cf. John i. 1.

the fourth Gospel does not rest on any mere quotation of texts. It is against the theology of that Gospel,—against the doctrine of the "Word who was God" becoming flesh—against its possibility and necessity —against the theory of man and the universe which underlies it—against the worship of Jesus, which was a consequence of it,—that the greatest and most powerful part of his polemic is directed. Julian might aver that the dogma of the Incarnation was an afterthought, an invention of John;[1] Celsus ascribes the claim of divinity to Christ Himself. His whole work takes for granted that this doctrine had permeated the Christian consciousness, and was coeval with the early promulgation of the truth: though widely travelled and widely read, though he had held intercourse with all schools of Christian thought, he nowhere suggests that the doctrine of the Incarnation is a recent invention. By its unconscious testimony to the continuity of Christian belief, even more than by the detailed passages of the Gospels which are quoted or implied, the 'True Word' is of great value to the student of historical theology.

The conclusion of most critics is, that Celsus had seen and read all the four Gospels;[2] but there is diversity of opinion with reference to his knowledge

[1] Cyril con. Julian., x. 327 A, B; vi. 213 B, C.

[2] Keim says that we find in Celsus particulars which "ganz und gar einzelnen unserer Evangelien eigenthümlich sind"—p. 227.

and use of other Gospels and kindred writings. Keim, while admitting it to be a possible hypothesis that Celsus had before him not our Gospels but their sources, holds that there is no certain trace of the use of apocryphal gospels; Reuss [1] and Aubé [2] hold that there is evidence of such use.

Celsus is aware of certain details concerning Jesus, "not like those recorded by the disciples," [3] but he designedly passes them by. He does not set them aside because they furnished no materials for attack—in the absurdities of the apocryphal gospels he had ample scope for his biting satire; but he is too much in earnest to waste time in refuting absurdities which the Christians themselves would disclaim: he passes them by because he seeks to destroy Christianity at the root, and therefore goes to the books on which the Christian religion was based. An attack on oral traditions, if he had been acquainted with such, would not have served his purpose. An argument founded on the silence of a writer is seldom satisfactory; but the silence of Celsus regarding the apocryphal gospels, taken along with his deliberate setting aside of them or similar documents, is, in the case of an enemy who was an accurate investigator, hard to explain unless on the supposition that he had ascertained that there were

[1] History of the Canon (Eng. trans.), p. 74, note.

[2] *Op. cit.*, pp. 222-233.

[3] *οὐ παραπλήσια τοῖς ὑπὸ τῶν μαθητῶν τοῦ Ἰησοῦ γραφεῖσιν*—ii. 13.

certain writings which were held by the Christians to be of exclusive, or at least of paramount, authority.

Setting aside one or two allusions which are only sinister exaggerations,[1] common in all controversial treatises, of real incidents or sayings found in the Gospels, we find five passages which have been adduced to show that Celsus recognised other sources of Christian beliefs than the canonical Gospels. On two of these—the charge of adultery brought against Mary,[2] and the ignoble and contemptible aspect of the man Jesus[3]—no discussion is necessary. The latter point is given as from hearsay, and is in harmony with all early ecclesiastical traditions; the former is not alleged by Celsus to be taken from any Gospel, and is confessedly of Jewish origin. The remaining passages are as follows. Celsus quotes as a saying of Jesus, "Every man being born according to divine Providence is a son of God;"[4] he speaks of the disciples as ten or eleven in number;[5] he speaks as if his authorities recorded the genealogy not of Joseph but of Mary.[6] The first passage, it seems unnecessary to say, belongs to the very rudiments of the teaching of Him who

[1] i. 61. Cf. Matt. viii. 20; ii. 39. Cf. Mark xiv. 50. Origen suggests (i. 63) that Celsus derived his view of the disciples as notoriously wicked men from the Epistle of Barnabas (c. 5).

[2] i. 28.

[3] vi. 75. See note 2, p. 65. Cf. Justin, 1st Apol., c. 52; Dial. cum Tryph., c. 14, 32, 36, 49, 88, &c.

[4] *εἰ τοῦτο λέγεις ὅτι πᾶς ἄνθρωπος κατὰ θείαν πρόνοιαν γεγονὼς υἱός ἐστι θεοῦ*—i. 57.

[5] i. 62; ii. 46.

[6] ii. 32.

revealed "our Father in heaven": had it not stood by itself, it might have been legitimate to refer it in its present form to the traditional sayings of our Lord which were still current in the Church; but, apart from the fact that Celsus seems to have deemed it advisable, in the interests of his polemic, in dealing with the life and teaching of Christ, to avail himself of the written documents rather than oral traditions, it seems unlikely that, if he used other than written authorities, he would have quoted only one saying out of many. It may be that Celsus, from imperfect memory, transformed into a specific saying of Jesus what he knew to be a fundamental principle in His teaching.[1] The second passage adds little or nothing to the evidence for the use by Celsus of other than the canonical Gospels. In no extant writing whatever is the number of the disciples given as other than twelve: he speaks in one place of ten publicans and sinners, in another of ten or eleven. His knowledge, even to verbal accuracy, of many details in the Gospel of St Matthew, precludes the possibility of his ignorance of the real number; the variation in his own statements seems to indicate that he spoke generally and in a contemptuous way of their fewness, as if it were of no consequence whether the number were one or two more or less.[2] The third

[1] Cf. Matt. v. 9; Luke vi. 35. The words of Celsus suggest John i. 13: ἐκ θεοῦ ἐγεννήθησαν.

[2] It is just possible that Celsus was only guilty of inadvertence,

passage raises a difficult question. Like Justin Martyr,[1] Celsus speaks as if the genealogies in the Gospels known to him were the genealogies of Mary. The coincidence, though it does not prove the dependence of Celsus on Justin,[2] is undoubtedly noteworthy. In both cases critics interpret the reference differently.[3] It is a question of probabilities. Are we to suppose that in this reference by itself we have evidence for the existence of other Gospels which, save on this point, differed not a jot from those now current in the Church? Or are we to account for it by the hypothesis of a various reading in the manuscript of Celsus, or simply by his having assumed without special examination—a natural assumption in the case—that it was the genealogy of Mary which was recorded in the narrative? In any case, on a review of the whole evidence, it is clear that Celsus used the canonical Gospels only, or other Christian documents which differed from them in no essential particular of fact or principle or doctrine.

Of his knowledge of the Epistles we have less certain trace. Except in the case of the Gospels,

and was misled by the narratives relating to the resurrection, in which the "eleven" are frequently mentioned (Matt. xxviii. 16; Mark xvi. 14; Luke xxiv. 33. Cf. Gospel of Nicodemus, c. xiv.)

[1] Dial. cum Tryph., c. 100 (Otto). [2] As Aubé and Pelagaud.

[3] Reuss (History of the Canon, p. 53) holds that it proves that Justin used another Gospel, or at least some document regarded as of equal authority. Donaldson (History of Christian Literature, vol. ii. p. 331) does not make special allusion to this point, but maintains that there is no evidence that Justin used any other Gospel.

Celsus does not profess to be making direct quotations from any Christian document. In his comparison of the precepts of Christianity with the teaching of Plato, he discusses a saying of St Paul[1] at the same time that he discusses the words of Jesus, and thus would seem both to know the Epistles of St Paul and recognise them as authoritative; but as he forthwith proceeds to cite illustrations of the crudest and most grotesque forms of Gnosticism, this conclusion cannot be drawn. He is familiar with the cardinal principles and the prominent watchwords in the Pauline theology, and plainly testifies to the currency and authority of St Paul's teaching in the Christian community; but, except in the case of one or two passages, it is difficult to decide whether he had read the Epistles themselves or knew them only at second-hand. Origen takes for granted that he has read them, but in one case at least he is in error in making this assumption.[2] If he had not read the Epistle to the Romans, he was at least well versed in its doctrinal positions;[3] he quotes with verbal accuracy a passage from Galatians,[4] and with almost verbal accuracy a passage in 1st Corinthians;[5] and various allusions scattered throughout the work render it very probable that he had read the

[1] 1 Cor. iii. 19. Cf. vi. 12; i. 9; iii. 72.

[2] v. 64. Cf. 1 Tim. iv. 1-3. See the passages quoted by Spencer from Irenæus and Epiphanius (Annot., p. 72).

[3] i. 9; iii. 39; vi. 7, 8, 11.

[4] v. 64. Cf. Gal. vi. 14.

[5] vi. 12. Cf. 1 Cor. iii. 19.

latter epistle.[1] He may possibly have read the Book of Acts,[2] 1st Epistle of St Peter,[3] and Hebrews.[4]

II. Celsus had undoubtedly an extensive knowledge of the Christian literature of the first two centuries; but, with few exceptions, the indications are too indefinite to enable us to decide with reasonable probability what particular writings lay before him. He expressly names only the 'Dispute between Jason and Papiscus,'[5] the 'Heavenly Dialogue,'[6] and the mystic "diagram"[7] of the Ophites. With characteristic acumen he has noted the Christian interpolations in the Sibylline Books.[8] From his knowledge of such works it may be conjectured that he had studied the Christian writings which dealt with the question of prophecy, and was well versed in the Gnostic literature, especially in the literature of the schools of Valentinus and Marcion. Is it possible to go further, and fix on any extant works of the early Apologists to which he had access? Tzschirner does not discuss the question, but declares it to be undeniable that he had not only read some of the sacred books of the Christians, but also the writings of the leading Apologists.[9] Keim, while acknowledging that the theology against which the attack of Celsus is directed is very

[1] iii. 44. Cf. 1 Cor. i. 26; viii. 24: 1 Cor. viii. 4; v. 17: 1 Cor. xv. 51, 52.
[2] iii. 10. Cf. Acts ii. 44; iv. 32.
[3] ii. 43. Cf. 1 Pet. iii. 19.
[4] vii. 28. Cf. Heb. xi. 16.
[5] iv. 52.
[6] viii. 15.
[7] vi. 24.
[8] vii. 53.
[9] Der Fall des Heidenthums, p. 327.

similar to that of Justin and his followers, maintains that there is no certain trace of his knowledge of their works.[1] According to Pelagaud, the 'True Word' was intended to be a refutation of the 'Dialogue with Trypho' and of the two "Apologies" of Justin.[2]

The more prominent notes in the writings or sayings of the Apologists with whom Celsus was familiar were these. They regarded the Greek stories as myths,[3] and threw special ridicule on the worship of the Egyptians.[4] They allegorised the Mosaic records,[5] explained most difficulties by appealing to prophecy,[6] emphasised the apologetic significance of the foreknowledge of Christ Himself,[7] and of the voluntary character of His sufferings.[8] In answer to objections which they could not otherwise refute, they fell back as a final expedient on the omnipotence of God.[9] It was a cardinal dogma of their creed that God made all things for the sake of man.[10] In their Christology they spoke of the Absolute Word,[11] of the Incarnation

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 231, note.

[2] P. 417 *et seq.*

[3] ii. 55; iii. 43. Cf. Justin, 1 Apol., c. 54.

[4] iii. 19. Cf. Justin, 1 Apol., c. 24.

[5] i. 14; iv. 48. Cf. Justin, Dial. cum Tryph., c. 68.

[6] vii. 2. Cf. Justin, 1 Apol., c. 30, 31, 43, 48, 50, 53, 61; Dial. cum Tryph., c. 7, 42, 89, 96.

[7] ii. 15, 44, 54; vi. 42. Cf. Justin, 1 Apol., c. 12; Dial. cum Tryph., c. 35, 51, 76, 82, 106.

[8] ii. 38, 47. Cf. Justin, 2 Apol., c. 6; Dial. cum Tryph., c. 45, 103.

[9] iii. 70; v. 14. Cf. Justin, 1 Apol., c. 18: *ἀδύνατον μηδὲν θεῷ.*

[10] iv. 23, 74. Cf. Justin, 1 Apol., c. 10; 2 Apol., c. 4, 5.

[11] ii. 31. Cf. Dial. cum Tryph., c. 61.

as a descent of God,[1] as a representation of the Godhead in a form adapted to the capacities of men.[2] In some teachers there was a tendency to an undue exaltation of the place of implicit faith in the Christian creed and life, and a corresponding depreciation of the place of knowledge.[3] From the parallel passages referred to in the notes, it will be manifest that many of the positions to which Celsus alludes can be referred to Justin, but there is also much that cannot be so explained. Hardly one of the maxims which are quoted by Celsus as distinctively Christian can be traced to Justin:[4] the technical term *autologos*,[5] so far as I have noted, is not used by him; nor is the conception of the Incarnation as a *kathodos* of God[6]—also a technical term—used by him. And even in cases where Justin seems to be the authority, there is a suggestion of more than is implied in his apologetic ground; for while, for example, Justin frequently calls attention to Christ's own predictions of His suffering, he does not do so precisely from the standpoint of the Christian apologetic that Celsus sought to overturn, which in some respects was of a subtler and more developed order than anything found in Justin.

The editor of the recently discovered Syriac trans-

[1] iv. 2, 52. [2] vi. 69. [3] i. 12; iii. 75; vi. 7.
[4] See previous note. [5] See Stephen's Thesaurus.
[6] The earliest quotations given in Suicer are from Eusebius and Athanasius.

lation of the 'Apology' of Aristides suggests that Celsus may have read that work;[1] the editor of the Greek text in the same volume thinks it more probable that he used rather the 'Preaching of Peter,' and is almost certain that he used the one or the other.[2] But the evidence adduced cannot be held to establish what would have been an interesting fact in literary history. Celsus deals with documents and views far more dogmatic and scientific than the 'Apology' of Aristides. Nothing can be built on the parallel passages concerning the place of man in the universe,[3] for this was a Christian commonplace, and was attacked by Celsus chiefly because of its bearing on the doctrine of the Incarnation. The only passage that gives any semblance of plausibility to the theory is the reference to the Jewish worship of angels, which is common to Aristides and Celsus.[4] Origen with justice calls on Celsus to point to any part of the Mosaic writings in which the worship of angels is inculcated;[5] but in whatever way it was introduced, angelolatry was a practice of some Jewish sects, and there is no necessity for ascribing Celsus's knowledge of it to his use of Aristides.[6] And, as has been pointed out, the same charge is brought against the

[1] The Apology of Aristides (Harris), p. 19 *et seq.*

[2] Ibid., 98 *et seq.*

[3] See note 10, p. 101.

[4] i. 26; v. 6. Cf. Aristides, c. 14, p. 48 (Harris).

[5] i. 26.

[6] See on the Jewish worship of angels, Lightfoot's Ignatius, vol. ii. p. 164; and Colossians, p. 196.

Jews in the 'Preaching of Peter.'[1] But from this source Celsus could not have taken it; for while in that work the Jews are condemned for "worshipping the angels and archangels, the month and the moon,"[2] the charge of Celsus is that the Jews worshipped "the heaven and the angels therein, and passed by the most venerable parts of the heaven—the sun, moon, and stars."[3] A survey of the limited materials at our disposal seems to point to the conclusion that, generally speaking, the position of Tzschirner is tenable; that there is no clear evidence that Celsus was acquainted with the 'Apology' of Aristides or the 'Preaching of Peter'; that a considerable section of the apologetic principles criticised by Celsus can be explained by the hypothesis of his knowledge of Justin, but that there are indications of a dogmatic school or schools different from his, and of an apologetic of a more advanced type than his; that these features may be ascribed in part to teachers whose works have perished, or to the oral statements of teachers who, by reason of their intellectual surroundings, had been led to give greater definiteness to their teaching, or who, perhaps from their intercourse and controversy with Celsus himself, had been compelled to give well-grounded reasons for the faith that was in them.

[1] Clem. Strom., vi. 5; Apol. of Aristides, p. 88.

[2] λατρεύοντες ἀγγέλοις καὶ ἀρχαγγέλοις, μηνὶ καὶ σελήνῃ. [3] v. 6.

III. It is not necessary for our present purpose to examine with like minuteness his various references to the poets and thinkers of Greece. Suffice it to say that the 'True Word' bears on every page the impress of great erudition and literary power. Celsus moves with the freedom and ease of a master in many departments of thought; he is at once a student of philosophy, of science, of music, of politics, and of comparative theology. He has not only grasped the general features of the Christian faith, but has mastered many of its details; he has studied it in its history, in its divisions, in its most obscure heresies, in its authoritative documents, by intercourse with its teachers of different schools. His work is the first scientific attack of Hellenic culture on the Christian creed, and not only strikes the keynote of all subsequent attacks, but contains their arguments sometimes in the letter, always in germ. The work of Julian, which was the culminating effort of Neoplatonism to check its triumphant foe, only reiterated, with additions suggested by the history of the Church in the interval, the reasoning adduced by Celsus nearly two centuries before. Julian repeated the lessons which he had learned in the school of the successors of Celsus after he had assimilated them into his quick and subtle intellect. To him, as to Celsus, innovation was the great evil, a religious conservatism the only safeguard of national and imperial vitality. Hence, with both, there was

contemptuous tolerance for the Jews, but none for the Christians. Julian added nothing to the armoury of Celsus—there was nothing to add; all that could be said against the religion of Christ, from a Platonic standpoint, had been said once for all. In his comparison of the Scriptures with the teaching of Plato, in his criticism of the Mosaic record of the creation, in his scoffing at the anthropomorphic conception of Deity therein and elsewhere presented, in his view of the dependence of Jewish fables upon Greek traditions, in his contempt for the Jews as a race of slaves, in his discussion of miracles, in his scorn of the folly of Christians in worshipping a dead man, in his mockery of the ignorant and wretched character of the adherents of Christianity, and even in little details, Julian is anticipated by Celsus. As a disciple of Plato and a lover of Greek dialectic, Celsus looked with the self-complacent contempt of philosophic culture on the adherents of a religion which rested on no rational basis, and admitted the uncultivated, even women and slaves, into its ranks. As the typical representative of that unmovable conservatism to which the past alone is sacred, he regarded Christianity as a revolutionary religion which sought to interfere with established customs and obliterate national distinctions which were designed to be eternal. As a patriot, who saw in the threatening movements of the barbarians a necessity for the con-

solidation of the empire, he abhorred a religion which acted as a disintegrating force, and was a source of weakness alike because of its direct teaching against military service, and because the God whom it desired to substitute for the victorious divinities of Rome had shown His impotence in the past history of the Jews and in the present distress of the Christians. As a firm believer in a theocratic nationalism, in the "right divine of kings," he looked on those who ignored this doctrine as at once impious and rebellious. His religious and political conservatism, even more than his pride of culture, blinded him to the moral force and beauty of the Gospel of Christ; and it is significant of his mental attitude that, when he alludes to the possibility of a universal religion — though only to dismiss such an absurd hypothesis with contempt—he is thinking not of the religious aspect of the question, but of the political advantages of unity of religious belief.[1]

No one can read the work of Celsus without being struck by the essentially modern character of his attack: analogous ideas, even parallel phrases, will occur to all interested in the theological literature of the nineteenth century.[2] It seems sometimes to be taken for granted by adherents as well as opponents that in the early centuries of its existence Christianity

[1] viii. 72.

[2] See Kellner's Hellenismus und Christenthum, pp. 434 *et seq.*

had to face persecution but not criticism, or that at least the attack to-day differs from anything hitherto known, alike in the conception of God and the universe on which it is based, and in the scientific method which it adopts; and the unspoken thought in many minds seems to be that Christianity, as set forth by the teachers who first gave scientific form to its dogmas, could never have arisen or advanced in a world where modern ideas were dominant, but would have been laughed out of existence. The simple in faith may be reminded that it is a poor compliment to what they regard as eternal truth, to speak as if it could only hold its own because it was not open to attack; as if God's voice could only be heard when every other voice was put to silence; as if the Gospel of Christ could only make progress when nothing was permitted to mar its growth; as if without a continual and manifest miracle the Church could not "stand four-square to all the winds that blow." The modern critic of the Christian faith may be asked to consider whether, after all, the change in the principles of attack is as great as the apparent change in form. It may be extravagant, like an enthusiastic admirer,[1] to see in Celsus a precursor of Darwin in the second century; but it is plain that, so far as his view of Christianity was determined by his root ideas concerning the relation between God and the world,

[1] Pelagaud, p. 447.

between man and the other animals, it led him to the same position as that adopted by many thinkers to-day. Christian writers who have spoken in contemptuous terms of the work of Celsus have shown little insight into the worth, even the apologetic worth, of the book; for the stronger the first attack was, the better for the true interests of Christian defence. The Church of Christ has no reason to regret that its first antagonist was animated by so keen a love of knowledge, and that his critical method was so thorough and far-reaching. It was the first onset of pagan thought, and also its most powerful: if the Gospel of Christ were not overthrown by such an attack, its victory was assured.

PART II.

THE REPLY OF ORIGEN

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CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION.

THE 'True Word' remained unanswered for seventy years. Whether Ambrose, his "taskmaster,"[1] to whose zeal we owe the publication of so many of the works of Origen, had himself been perplexed by it, or had found it a source of perplexity to others, we do not know; but he recognised its importance and the necessity of its being answered, and with that aim sent it to Origen requesting him to refute it in every detail.[2] The reply of Origen, which appeared probably in 248,[3] when he was more than sixty years of age,[4]

[1] Origen so describes Ambrose in his Comm. in Joann., v. (Lomm., vol. i. p. 163), *ἐργοδιώκτης*. See Ex. iii. 5—LXX.

[2] Pref., 4; ii. 20.

[3] Eusebius (E. H., vi. 36) ascribes it to the reign of Philip (244-249).

[4] Origen was born in 185; died 254.

contains his maturest thought on the problems presented by Christianity, and has met in every age with almost absolute approval. Eusebius[1] begins his reply to Hierocles by a declaration that such a work as his was superfluous, as all the objections had been substantially refuted by anticipation in the eight books of Origen against Celsus. It has been characterised as a golden work which it is impossible to praise too highly;[2] as the best and most complete of all the apologies of Christian antiquity;[3] as a rich storehouse of arms.[4]

For the work to which Ambrose summoned him Origen was singularly well equipped, both by nature and training. Reared in Alexandria, the home of all liberal culture, where every school of thought had its disciples and every religion its devotees, he was from early years brought face to face with the points of divergence, as well as with the points of contact, between Christianity and the other religions which had their representatives in that nursery of all forms of eclecticism.[5] A divorce of culture from Christianity might have been possible elsewhere, but was an impossibility at Alexandria: there a reconciliation was a

[1] Adv. Hieroc., vol. iv. p. 798 (Migne).

[2] "Opus aureum nec facile nunquam satis laudandum."—Voss, quoted by Fabricius, Delectus Argument., p. 63.

[3] Du Pin, Biblioth. des Auteurs Eccl., vol. i. p. 142.

[4] Redepenning, Origenes, vol. ii. p. 153.

[5] Cf. Cognat, Clément d'Alexandrie, p. 179.

necessity. As a teacher in the Catechetical School,[1] first under Pantænus, then under Clement, and after his death as its sole head, he was accustomed to teach Christianity in its relation to all truth — scientific, ethical, and philosophical. Even if the glowing picture of Gregory[2] be somewhat softened, and ample allowance be made for the exaggeration of a scholar who had set himself to the delivery of a panegyric on the eve of his departure, there remains in outline the portrait of a teacher of unequalled gifts and rare width of sympathies. Christianity was set forth by Origen as the crown of all learning, and all liberal arts as its handmaids.[3] Philosophy, in the widest sense of the term, was upheld as the prerogative of man, and its pursuit as a necessary condition of true piety.[4] He carefully trained his scholars in the art of detecting all sophisms and fallacies.[5] He encouraged them to read everything that had been written by philosophers and poets of old, with the exception of the works of atheists.[6] Narrowness was avoided; for they were introduced not to one school of Greek thought only, but to all.[7] In presenting the truths of natural science, he expounded

[1] Guericke, De Schola quæ Alex. flor., pp. 39, 100-103.

[2] Greg., Thaumat. Panegyrica Orat. (Lomm., vol. xxv. pp. 339-381).

[3] Greg., Paneg., c. 6.

[4] *οὐδὲ εὐσεβεῖν ὅλως δυνατὸν εἶναι ἔφασκεν, ὀρθῶς λέγων, μὴ φιλοσοφήσαντι.*—Greg., Paneg., c. 6.

[5] Greg., c. 7. [6] Greg., c. 13. [7] Idem.

the principles which he had learned from others, and likewise the results of his own investigation; and transformed their irrational wonder into rational reverence for the "sacred economy of the universe."[1] Geometry was represented as the "immutable groundwork of all branches of science."[2] Ethics—practical rather than theoretical—was the end and goal of all speculation.[3] To his scholars he seemed to possess a divine commission, as real as that of any prophet or apostle, to be the advocate and interpreter of the oracles of God. He had no esoteric doctrine,—no subject was forbidden, nothing was concealed or inaccessible: it was possible for them to learn every form of doctrine, barbarian and Greek, spiritual and political, divine and human; to enjoy to the full all the sweets of intellect.[4] In the face of such statements, which are supported by other testimonies, it is difficult to understand the endeavours which have been made to minimise the extent of the culture of Origen.[5] He did not, it is true, study either science or philosophy for its own sake, but only in its direct relationship to Christian truth; he borrowed from philosophy not so much its principles as its method; he ascribed to philosophy in relation to Christianity the function which geometry and other disciplines

[1] καὶ λόγων ὧν τε ἔμαθεν, ὧν τε ἐξεύρετο περὶ τῆς τῶν ὅλων οἰκονομίας τῆς ἱερᾶς—c. 8.

[2] Greg., c. 8. [3] Greg., c. 9. [4] Greg., c. 14.

[5] See Denis, De la Philosophie d'Origène, pp. 12-25.

occupied in relation to philosophy.[1] As the gold and silver borrowed from the Egyptians were transformed into holy vessels for the service of God, so, he held, should all Greek wisdom be borrowed and made subservient to the cause of Christianity.[2] If the friendliness of his attitude towards philosophy is less pronounced than that of Clement,[3] may not the reason be that Clement had to justify the position which he adopted, while his teaching had borne such fruit that Origen could take for granted what Clement had found it necessary to justify?

Though armed for the conflict as few have been, Origen was very unwilling to enter into controversy. He deemed it to be unadvisable on general grounds: he held it to be superfluous in view of the characteristics of the work of Celsus. The silence of Christ before the false witnesses should be the ideal of His followers in presence of calumnious attacks.[4] As, with a noble contempt, He continued silent, allowing His life and work to speak for themselves; so Christian facts and doctrines are their own apology, and any other apology tends insensibly to weaken the force of this.[5] The feebleness of the attack of Celsus lends special force to this rule of silence: Origen does not know how to classify a man whose faith could be

[1] Epis. ad Greg., 1 (Lomm., vol. xvii. p. 50).
[2] Epis. ad Greg., 2.
[3] The view of Denis, p. 22.
[4] Pref., 1.
[5] Pref., 2, 3. Cf. viii. 1.

shaken by such an attack.[1] He writes, solely in deference to the request of Ambrose, for those who are feeble in faith, or do not know what faith is.[2] Of the 'True Word' and its author he speaks with strong contempt. His work was a schoolboy exercise.[3] He was prolix, and seemed only anxious to swell out his book with many words.[4] In place of weighty arguments he dealt in buffoonery, as if he were writing a farce or a jest-book.[5] His great show of erudition was only over-curious trifling and silly talk.[6] So radically weak was the assault, that it could be overthrown even from the standpoint of a Marcionite.[7] This contempt for the enemy is the one weak point in the reply; for it makes him fail to see the force of some of the objections raised by Celsus, and makes him satisfied with imperfect answers. Apart from this, Origen was a singularly fair controversialist. He loved truth too well not to acknowledge that on some points the teaching of Celsus was sound.[8] He called God to witness that his conscientious aim was to establish the divinity of the doctrine of Jesus by no false arguments, but by varied and clear testimony.[9]

His work, as described by himself, had a twofold aim, —to destroy the arguments of Celsus and to exhibit the truth; to uproot evil germs and to implant the

[1] Pref., 4. [2] Pref., 6. [3] v. 58. [4] vi. 60; vii. 56.
[5] vi. 74. [6] vi. 32. [7] vii. 2.
[8] φίλη γὰρ ἡ ἀλήθεια—iii. 16. [9] i. 46.

divine seed.[1] The words of Celsus, like poisoned arrows, had wounded the souls of some who were not absolutely protected by the panoply of God: Origen sought to extract the dart, and apply a rational remedy to the wound.[2] In carrying out this object, he gives a series of prescriptions, but behind every prescription there is a principle. After he had finished the opening section, for the sake of economising his time he altered his plan.[3] His original intention was to take a note of the heads of the objections of Celsus and reply to each head, and then to give a systematic form to the argument. Instead of doing so, he takes up the statements of Celsus one by one, and "wrestles with them specifically."[4] This change of plan destroys the unity of the work, and gives rise to frequent repetitions: when Celsus repeats himself, Origen as a rule does the same; when Celsus contradicts himself, Origen contradicts the contradiction. The result is that, as the book stands, we have all the materials for an apology, but they lie without order or proportion: it is "a quarry of weighty dogmatic disquisitions,"[5] but not a symmetrical building; and it is only by bringing together isolated and scattered thoughts that we can ascertain what Origen taught on the great problems of Christian Apologetics. From first to last

[1] Pref., 4. [2] iv. 1. [3] Pref., 6.

[4] *συγγραφικῶς ἀγωνίσασθαι πρὸς τὰ Κέλσου καθ' ἡμῶν ἐγκλήματα*—Pref., 6.

[5] Redepenning, vol. ii. p. 153.

the central figure of the Divine Man stands out conspicuous; in every argument the ethical impulse is paramount; from beginning to end one note rings out loudly and clearly, the note of certain victory;[1] throughout is dominant the conviction which he had implanted in his disciple Gregory, that "nothing would withstand the saving Word, which was and would be the king of all."[2] In this ever-present consciousness of the ultimate triumph of the cause which he represented probably lay the secret of his contempt for his antagonist.

[1] viii. 68.

[2] Greg., Paneg. in Orig., c. 6 (Lomm., vol. xxv. p. 356): *οὐ γάρ ἐστιν ὅ τι αὐτῷ ἐνστήσεται, πάντων καὶ ὄντι καὶ ἐσομένῳ βασιλεῖ.*

CHAPTER II.

DEFENCE OF THE SCRIPTURES.

On the threshold of his inquiry Celsus would learn that Christianity was not based on floating traditions, but on a historic record which claimed to possess a unique character. The authority of that record, of the Jewish as well as of the Christian portions, was recognised by all sections of the Church except the followers of Marcion; and to impugn the validity of its claims was a necessary preliminary to the attack of the system which was founded upon it. From the method of argumentation which he adopted, Celsus did not, it is true, pursue this criticism in a logical fashion: sometimes he attacked the principle of authority in order to throw doubt on the details; more frequently he attacked the details in order to disprove the authority. The reply of Origen to his criticism may be presented in two sections: I. Defence of the idea of Revelation generally. II. Defence of Judaism in itself, and in its relation to Christianity.

I. A Revelation—so we may put the thought of Celsus—is not necessary; but if it be necessary, it must be marked by certain distinctive excellences. It must be original, or it is superfluous; it must be superior to other writings, or its claims may be set aside; it must present a right conception of Deity, or it is self-condemned. Applying these tests to the Scriptures, Celsus found them utterly wanting. There was in them nothing original to confirm their lofty claims, and much that was directly borrowed; they were in all respects inferior to the writings of the Greek thinkers; they presented an unworthy and irreverent conception of Deity. As an apologist, Origen acknowledged it to be imperative to maintain not only the antiquity but the venerable character of Scripture and the consistency of its parts, to explain seeming incongruities, and to show that there was in them nothing evil, nor shameful, nor unholy.[1]

1. A Revelation is necessary, for the knowledge of God is beyond the grasp of human nature.[2] The necessity of it is virtually acknowledged by philosophers, when they speak of the hardness of finding out the Father and Creator of the universe. Man must himself use every effort to attain to this knowledge: the revelation is granted to such as strive, and acknowledge their need of aid.[3] A Revelation must be ori-

[1] iv. 20; vii. 12. [2] vii. 44. [3] vii. 42.

ginal, but by originality is not meant absolute novelty. On the contrary, the germs of those truths which are taught by God in Christ and the prophets have been sown by Him in the souls of all men. The law was written on the tablets of the hearts of men before it was written on tables of stone.[1] All the principles by which men are stimulated to higher life are God-given:[2] all truth in Plato or others is due to His inspiration.[3] The common notions of good and just, of evil and unjust, are in no man utterly lost.[4] The beauty and piety of the Christian doctrines are self-evident:[5] they are in harmony with the common notions which have been implanted in men,[6] and the soul at once recognises their affinity to that which is highest in itself. Take as an illustration the teaching of Scripture concerning idolatry. It is contrary to the common consciousness of mankind to conceive of God as corruptible wood or stone; and when the rational soul hears in Scripture the condemnation of idols, "it recognises what is related to itself, casts aside those things which it has long regarded as divine, and recovers its natural affection towards its Creator;"[7] and in consequence of that natural affection

[1] τὸν αὐτὸν θεὸν, ἅπερ ἐδίδαξε διὰ τῶν προφητῶν καὶ τοῦ σωτῆρος, ἐγκατεσπαρκέναι ταῖς ἁπάντων ἀνθρώπων ψυχαῖς—i. 4. Cf. Tertull. adv. Judæos, c. 2.

[2] iv. 4. [3] vi. 3. [4] viii. 52. Cf. viii. 63. [5] v. 65.

[6] τὰ τῆς πίστεως ἡμῶν, ταῖς κοιναῖς ἐννοίαις ἀρχῆθεν συναγορεύοντα —iii. 40.

[7] φίλτρον δ' ἀναλαμβάνει φυσικὸν τὸ πρὸς τὸν κτίσαντα—iii. 40.

towards God it receives Christ, who first presented these truths to all nations.[1] God is the source of the partial truth found outside Scripture, and of the fuller truth given there; and it is no objection to the teaching of Moses that it is in harmony with the wisest teaching of all nations,[2] or to Christianity that similar sayings are found among the Greeks, provided the teaching itself be wholesome and beneficial.[3] The originality of the Christian dogmas lies in their moral force. Though the teaching of the Greeks be the same as that of the Word, it does not possess the same power to subdue the souls of men and dispose their lives accordingly. This is the test both of truth and originality: the truth must be held to lie with those who induce their hearers to live as if the dogmas were true.[4]

The assertion of Celsus that the Scriptures in many parts were only an echo of Greek traditions, and that certain passages were borrowed from Greek writers, especially from Plato, Origen meets with a series of counter-assertions. No Christian dogma, no particular saying, has been so borrowed. The conception of Satan was not taken from Pherecydes.[5] The narrative of the Tower of Babel is not a corruption of the story of the Aloidæ.[6] The Christian representation of heaven is not a misunderstanding of the teaching of Plato.[7] The same is true of all the sayings in

[1] iii. 40. [2] i. 21. [3] vii. 59. [4] viii. 48.
[5] vi. 43. [6] iv. 12. [7] vii. 30.

Scripture, the origin of which was ascribed by Celsus to passages in Greek writings.[1] For Moses was very much more ancient than Homer or Plato, from whom he is alleged to have borrowed, and lived even before the invention of the Greek letters.[2] The apostles of Christ no doubt were later than Plato. But is it not incredible on the face of it that Paul the tentmaker, and Peter the fisherman, and John "who left the nets of his father," should have misinterpreted passages in the 'Epistles' of Plato, and from that source transmitted their teaching concerning God?[3] The similarity rather shows that Plato was familiar with the teaching of the Old Testament, whether by chance or from intercourse during his residence in Egypt with those who gave a speculative exposition of the Jewish system; and Plato, it may be, modified what he heard out of deference to the prejudices of his countrymen, who were in the habit of traducing the Jews because of the foreign features in their laws and their peculiar polity.[4] In one place Origen seems to propound another theory by his suggestion that a passage in the 'Phædrus' was inspired by Satan as an intentional parallel to the teaching of Scripture.[5]

2. In maintaining the inferiority of the Scriptures to the writings of the Greeks, Celsus alluded contemptuously to the allegorical exposition of the Jewish books; and in defending the Scriptures, Origen assigns

[1] vi. 12, 15. [2] vi. 47; iv. 21. [3] vi. 7. [4] iv. 39. [5] viii. 4.

to that method a prominent place. It dominates and vitiates a great part of his apology.[1] His argument runs thus. To attack the allegorising method is to prevent the best apology.[2] That Scripture, in many parts, was written in order to be allegorised, is so manifest that elaborate proof would be superfluous.[3] Had Celsus grasped the mystical sense, he would not have spoken of the Jewish tales as childish and inartistic, nor condemned their "vulgarity and simplicity."[4] It is unfair to assume an esoteric meaning in the Egyptian worship of irrational animals,[5] or to allow the Greeks to interpret their fables figuratively, and close against Christians the door of a consistent interpretation of Scripture, in all respects in harmony with its inspiration.[6] By his condemnation of Philo, Celsus only showed his ignorance; for even Greeks given to speculation might be captivated by his finished style and carefully elaborated opinions.[7] In the Word actual histories are employed to represent greater things, but the historical narrative has in itself some truth.[8] If the allegorical method had been an invention of the "modest" men of to-day, the charge of

[1] The most striking illustration of this allegorical bias is found in vi. 9, where he gives a Christian interpretation to a passage quoted by Celsus from the Epistles of Plato (vii. 342 B).

[2] i. 17.

[3] iv. 49, 50. *τί με δεῖ ἐπὶ πλείονα κατασκευάζειν τὰ μὴ δεόμενα κατασκευῆς*—iv. 50.

[4] iv. 42, 87. [5] i. 20. [6] iv. 17, 28; vi. 28.

[7] iv. 51; vi. 21. [8] iv. 44; v. 31.

Celsus would have been plausible; but the fathers of the Christian doctrines themselves employed it.[1] Any one who reads the Epistle to the Galatians can see how St Paul treated marriages, servants, &c., in a tropological way.[2] Considered as such, the Scriptural myths are superior to those of the Greeks: they keep in view the multitude of the simpler class of believers.[3] What was designed to be immediately useful to the hearers, and to contribute to their moral improvement, the prophets spoke without any concealment; but matters of a mystic character, and suitable for the more deeply initiated, they disclosed by enigmas and allegories, dark sayings and parables.[4] Greek philosophy takes no account of the ordinary hearer; it is written only for those who can allegorise. But Moses carefully studied rhetorical form, and everywhere was careful to introduce a twofold sense, so that the mass of the Jews have no occasion to err in questions of morals, while the few with more insight into his meaning find his writings full of speculation.[5]

In other parts of his argument on this point, Origen occupies firmer ground. He discusses the relation of philosophy to Christianity in a catholic spirit. Though he maintains that a diviner spirit dwelt in Moses than in Plato,[6] and that the prophets of God and the apostles of Jesus spoke diviner truths than he, he does not seek to oppose the teaching of philosophers in a contentious

[1] iv. 49. [2] iv. 44. [3] iv. 50. [4] vii. 10. [5] i. 18. [6] i. 19.

spirit.[1] Christianity is the highest philosophy: to its majestic heights all learning may be a stepping-stone.[2] In respect of the type of men who received the prophetic gift, of the conscience of the writers as revealed in their works, of the ideal of future blessedness, and of the ethical results of its theological speculations, Christianity is far superior to Greek philosophy. The prophets varied in the measure of their apprehension of truth; but only the holiest souls who lived in close fellowship with God were inspired by Him.[3] They record that which, if it be miraculous, has come within their own experience, and eagerly contend for their convictions.[4] Did they err in supposing that it was the source of every blessing to believe in the God of all, and not to cherish even a thought displeasing to Him?[5] When the truth is common to philosophy and Christianity, a comparison reveals the superiority of the latter. Both acknowledge the immortality of the soul: taking as the test of truth the ideal of future blessedness, which has the better claim to be regarded as the gift of God, and to have been spoken by the Divine Spirit? Is it the end presented in the Gospel of Christ to those who have lived a life of blameless purity, and have given an undivided love to the supreme God? Or is it that which is set forth by any sect of philosophers, whether Greek or barbarian, or promised in any of the mysteries? Origen challenges proof that

[1] vii. 48. [2] iii. 58. [3] vii. 51; iv. 95, 96. [4] iv. 53. [5] Idem.

words acknowledged by all to be human are superior to words announced by divine inspiration.[1] Let their history be compared with ours, and their ethical treatises with our laws, in respect of moral force.[2] The loftiest speculations of the Greeks were only theories, and bore no fruit. After writing about the "chief good," they descended into the Peiræus and prayed to Artemis as a god; and after philosophising about the soul, they cherished petty thoughts and would sacrifice a cock to Asclepius.[3] Their theorising did not advance the genuine piety of the readers, not even of the writers; but those who sincerely read the Scriptures with their mean diction are inspired with a divine energy,[4] for the style adopted is determined by moral considerations. Philosophical discourses marked by beauty of composition may have turned a few profligates into philosophers: the vulgar words of Scripture have acted like charms, and have transformed whole masses of men, so that unmanly cowardice is supplanted by a moral courage that despises death.[5] The love of mankind, not of any one class or section, inspired the ambassadors of truth; hence their adoption of a style fitted to appeal to every class of hearers. To pass by the ignorant because they cannot attend to the logical sequence of a discourse, and to think only of those who have been trained in rhetoric and all liberal arts, is to cherish a

[1] iii. 81. [2] i. 18. [3] vi. 4. [4] vi. 5. [5] iii. 68.

very restricted notion of our duty to others or of the public good.[1] You will find Plato, with his beautiful style, only in the hands of students of languages; you will find Epictetus, with his simpler style, in the hands of the common people. The divine Word is, moreover, singular in this respect, that its sayings do not touch the soul unless a certain power be granted from God to the speaker, and "grace bloom on his words."[2] Origen declares that the style of the prophetic books is elegant according to the forms of the Hebrew language; but on that little stress is put by him. He seeks to prove the superiority of Scripture by an analogy of a homely type. "Take some healthy and invigorating food, and let it be prepared and dressed with such seasoning that it cannot be partaken of by peasants or by the poor, but only by the rich and delicate: take the same food and let it be prepared not for those who are considered dainty, but in such a way as to suit the poor, and the peasants, and the vast majority of men. If from the former only the more dainty gain health, while it is untouched by the mass of the people, and from the latter the majority of men gain healthy sustenance,—which, with a view to the public good, shall we consider to be wholesome? Provided both preparations are equally wholesome, is it not manifest, on the ground alike of humanity and of the common good, that the physician who takes forethought for the health

[1] vi. 1. [2] vi. 21; vii. 61.

of the many is a greater benefactor than he who thinks only of the few?"[1] Plato and the wise men of the Greeks are typified by the former method; the Jewish prophets and the disciples, who adapt their style to the majority, are typified by the latter. If the object of food for the reason be to make men forbearing and gentle, is that word not better prepared which makes multitudes forbearing and gentle rather than a very few—even if it be conceded that the polished method has this effect? If a Greek desired to impart healthy doctrines to Egyptians or Syrians, he would first resolve to learn their language: he would rather be a "barbarian"—to use a Greek phrase—than continue a Greek, and be unable to say anything profitable to the Egyptians or Syrians. "And in like manner the Divine Nature, making provision not for those who are instructed in Greek learning only, but for the rest of men, condescended to the ignorance of the multitude of the hearers, that by the use of familiar phrases it might appeal to the multitude." Origen, however, guards against the possibility of misconception: his analogy is not meant to imply that there is not in the Word sufficient to gratify the daintiest intellectual appetite. When once men have been introduced into the principles of Christianity they become eager to apprehend the secret thoughts which are revealed to those who devote themselves to the investigation

[1] vii. 59.

of the Word, according to the measure of their toil and study.[1] It is in making provision alike for the wants of the ignorant and the enlightened that the distinctive excellence of the Scripture lies.[2]

3. A more serious charge than inferiority or want of originality is brought against the Scriptures by Celsus. Seeing clearly that the highest test of any religious system is its representation of the character of God, he sought to show that the conception of God set forth in Scripture was unworthy, degraded, and purely material. It speaks of the invisible God as visible, of the unknowable God as knowable. It speaks of His voice, His hands, His image. It ascribes to Him human passions, anger, and threatenings. It takes away from His omnipotence by representing Him as unable to secure the obedience of the one man whom He Himself had made.

Origen agrees to a certain extent with Celsus in regard to the limitations of man's knowledge of God. Scripture speaks of God "making darkness His secret place": it is thus admitted that, so far as a perfect apprehension is concerned, He is unseen and unknowable, and that He conceals Himself from those who cannot endure the splendours of His knowledge, and are unable to behold Him; partly because of the understanding being polluted by being attached to "the body of humiliation," partly because of its re-

[1] vii. 60. [2] vii. 41.

stricted power of apprehending God.[1] All that we know is less than God: He is beyond the grasp not of human nature only but of the superhuman;[2] yet we know some of His attributes, for He has virtue, blessedness, divinity.[3] Even in seeking to describe natural qualities and distinctions, human language is imperfect. God cannot be named in the sense that we have any signs or expressions fully to set forth His attributes. Many qualities are unnamable: who can distinguish by a name the difference between the quality of sweetness in a date and a fig? But He can be named, if you regard the name as a means by which we can represent some divine attribute, which takes the hearer by the hand, as it were, and gives him a certain idea of God.[4] He cannot be seen, because He has not a body, but He can be seen with the heart—that is, with the understanding; not with any heart, but with the pure only. The God of all (who is Intelligence, or One who transcends intelligence and essence) is simple, invisible, and bodiless, and can only be apprehended by that intelligence which is made after the image of His intelligence.[5] It is the inner man which is made in the image of God.[6] The Christian is thus the true agnostic: admitting the imperfection of his knowledge of God, he holds that it

[1] vi. 17.

[2] *οὐ μόνη ἡ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου φύσις, ἀλλὰ καὶ τῶν ὑπεραναβεβηκότων αὐτὴν*—vi. 62.

[3] vi. 62. [4] vi. 65. [5] vii. 38. [6] vi. 63.

is true as far as it goes: the want of clearness is due in part to the narrow range of our vision, in part to the mercy of God, who veils the horizon with clouds to soften the lustre which otherwise might blind us.

The power of God to manifest Himself is limited both in matter and in form by the capacity of men to receive the truth, and by the moral aim of Revelation. This explains the obscurity of Scripture as well as the ascription of human attributes to Deity. The law-giver who was asked whether he had prescribed the best laws for the citizens, gave answer that he had not given such laws as were absolutely the best, but the best that they were able to receive: so God has given to the people the best laws and teaching that it was possible for them to receive.[1] As a teacher discoursing to young children adapts himself to their weakness, and aims not at the display of his own ability but at the moral training of his scholars, so the Word of God adapts its message to the capacity of the hearers. When God spoke in His Word to men, He did not assume a character befitting His own divinity; He assumed, as it were, the manners of a man for the advantage of men.[2]

Expressions in which physical qualities or actions

[1] iii. 79.

[2] iv. 71; ii. 76. *οἱονεὶ ἀνθρώπου τρόπους πρὸς τὸ ἀνθρώποις λυσιτελὲς φορῶν ὁ λόγος τοιαῦτα λέγῃ.* Cf. Deut. i. 31: *ἐτροποφόρησέ σε κύριος ὁ θεός σου, ὡς εἴ τις τροποφορήσαι ἄνθρωπος τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ.*

are ascribed to God are to be understood figuratively.[1] The eyes of the Word have nothing in common with the eyes of the body but the name.[2] Corporeal names are employed to express that which is grasped by the understanding.[3] God comes down to men in the same sense that teachers condescend to children, or wise men to beginners in philosophy.[4] The threatenings and abuse arise from a divine accommodation to the weakness of the hearers; they are applied as a healing drug.[5] When God sends outward evil of any kind, it is by way of discipline, like the action of a father, or a teacher, or a physician.[6] The wrath of God is not a passion akin to that of men: His threatenings are a declaration of what will happen to the wicked, and are no more threats, properly speaking, than the words of a physician who should say that he would apply the knife or the cautery, if the patient disobeyed his instructions.[7] Scripture speaks of God as a "consuming fire." But what may God fittingly consume save wickedness and its fruits?[8] In like manner He is a "refiner's fire," for He refines the rational nature which has become filled with lead—with the impure matters that adulterate the gold or silver of the soul.[9] God applies the discipline of fire, as the benefactor of

[1] i. 71; vi. 64, &c. [2] vii. 34; ii. 72. [3] vi. 70.
[4] iv. 12. [5] ii. 76. [6] vi. 56. [7] iv. 72.
[8] *ζητοῦμεν τίνα πρέπει ὑπὸ θεοῦ καταναλίσκεσθαι; Καί φαμεν, ὅτι τὴν κακίαν καὶ τὰ ἀπ' αὐτῆς πραττόμενα*—iv. 13.
[9] iv. 13. Cf. vi. 72.

those who need it. For the good of those who could not otherwise escape from the flood of wickedness, the Word speaks of such gloomy matters with a wise obscurity; for some cannot be converted except through fear and a representation of punishments.[1]

All objections to the Scriptural representation of God based on the disobedience of man are equally valid against any theory of Providence.[2] We have here only one aspect of the problem of the existence of evil.[3] Adam is man: when Moses speaks of Adam he is theorising about the nature of man. As well ask why God did not by divine power create men who needed no reformation, but were immediately good and perfect? All such problems find their solution in the possession by man of free-will. "They may perplex the ignorant and the foolish, but not one with any insight into the nature of things; for if you take away from virtue the element of spontaneity, you take away its essence."[4]

II. Like many of his successors, Celsus attacked Christianity through Judaism. The Old Testament records were full of absurdities; the Mosaic cosmogony was childish and unphilosophical; the religious rites of the Jews were borrowed; such a miserable race could never have been beloved by God, nor its

[1] v. 15, 16; viii. 48; iii. 78. [2] vi. 57; iv. 3; iii. 35. [3] iv. 40.
[4] ὅτι ἀρετῆς μὲν ἐὰν ἀνέλῃς το ἑκούσιον, ἀνεῖλες αὐτῆς καὶ τὴν οὐσίαν —iv. 3.

teachers truly inspired. As for the Jews who became Christians, they were renegades from the law of their fathers. Christianity was dependent on Judaism, yet in its ideals and doctrines it was in irreconcilable conflict with it.

1. Origen defends the character of Moses as well as the inspiration of his writings. Moses was no magician, but a pious man who participated in the Divine Spirit; his laws were inspired by God; his record is true.[1] The antiquity and veracity of the Mosaic record are confirmed by Assyrian writings, as well as by the testimony of Greeks and Egyptians, and of those who were interested in Phœnician history.[2] In the deference paid to them by Numenius the Pythagorean, in current traditions respecting the dependence of Pythagoras himself on Jewish philosophy, and in the works of Josephus, further testimony as to the authority of the Mosaic writings may be found. The mythic lawgivers of Greece have left no trace on the national life; but to-day a whole nation, though it be scattered through the whole world, is directed by the legislation of Moses.[3] It is a reckless charge to declare that the books of Moses, or rather what was written by the Divine Spirit in Moses, are unintelligible and without esoteric meaning.[4] Take, for example, the "flaming sword, that turned every way to keep the way of the tree of life."

[1] iii. 5. [2] i. 14; iv. 11. [3] i. 15, 16. Cf. iv. 51; viii. 47. [4] iv. 55.

Had Moses no clear idea when he wrote these words? Was he acting like the poets of the Old Comedy, when, with the view of creating laughter, they jested about Proitus slaying Bellerophon? Is it credible that one who sought to persuade a whole nation that they were of God should have written without any point these words or the other sections on the genesis of man?[1] All will acknowledge this to be a sound principle of literary criticism: divergence arises when we come to the question, not whether the writer meant anything, but what he did mean. To Origen it is incredible that the Greeks and barbarians could pride themselves on their mysteries, and that the Jewish nation which had been taught to ascend to God the Uncreated and gaze only on Him, should have received no share in divine esoterics.[2] It is mainly by the application of these principles that he disposes of the criticism of Celsus.

2. For his views on the Mosaic cosmogony he refers to his exposition of Genesis.[3] That section of the commentary is lost; but it is evident from the Homilies extant that he got rid of the objections by allegorising the record, for he says here that in that work he found fault with those who understood the six days in their apparent signification.[4] God did not "rest"[5]

[1] vi. 49. [2] iv. 38. [3] vi. 51.

[4] ἐγκαλοῦντες τοῖς κατὰ τὴν προχειροτέραν ἐκδοχὴν φήσασι χρόνους ἐξ ἡμερῶν διεληλυθέναι εἰς τὴν κοσμοποιΐαν—vi. 51, 60.

[5] ἀνεπάυσατο.

from His work; He only "ceased" from working.[1] The difficulty arising from the small dimensions of the ark he solves by the adoption of what he elsewhere calls "the geometrical method of the Egyptians, in which Moses was skilled" — that is, by squaring the figures given in the narrative.[2] The wells given by God to the righteous are not to be interpreted literally; but it may be observed that the truth of the narrative in Genesis is confirmed by the existence of wells in Ascalon, which are foreign in their structure and different from the rest of the wells in that district.[3] The story of the incest of Lot shows the love of truth in those who wrote the divine Scriptures, since they did not conceal offensive matters: this fact of itself should have induced Celsus to acknowledge that the other and miraculous portions were not invented. The act itself Origen defends on philosophical grounds. Good and evil, according to Greek writers on ethics, lie in the will only; and, apart from the will, all actions are, strictly speaking, indifferent. In the order of things indifferent they would (in the special circumstances of the case) place such an action as that of Lot. Some, indeed, say that it is condemned by the accursed issue. As a matter of fact, Scripture neither clearly approves nor condemns it; and, in any case, it may be explained

[1] κατέπαυσε—vi. 61.
[2] iv. 41, 42. Cf. Hom. in Genes., ii. 2.
[3] iv. 44.

figuratively.[1] The silence of Joseph under a false accusation shows his magnanimity; and as for the sneer of Celsus at the story of his making himself known to his brethren, Origen says that not even Momus himself could reasonably find fault with it, as, apart from its tropology, it contains much that is attractive.[2]

3. The originality of the rite of circumcision in itself is not maintained by Origen. It is practised by the Egyptians and Colchians; but as it is practised by the Jews for a different reason, it is not to be considered the same circumcision. For in virtue of "the purpose, the law, and intention" of him who circumcises, the act assumes a different character.[3] As righteousness means one thing to Epicurus, another to the Stoics, and another to the Platonists, so circumcision is different according to the different opinions of those who are circumcised.[4] The same argument applies to the abstinence from swine's flesh, which is common to the Jews and the Egyptian priests.[5]

In his prohibition of augury Origen sees evidence of the wisdom of Moses, and especially in his classifi-

[1] iv. 45.

[2] iv. 46, 47.

[3] Ἡ γὰρ πρόθεσις καὶ ὁ νόμος καὶ τὸ βούλημα τοῦ περιτέμνοντος, ἀλλοῖον ποιεῖ το πρᾶγμα—v. 47.

[4] v. 47.

[5] v. 49. Cf. vii. 64. Abstinence from the flesh of animals is not of the same order as abstinence from wickedness—viii. 30.

cation among impure animals of all such as were held by the Egyptians and others to be instruments of divination.[1] Origen attaches great importance to the power shown by the use of the name of Abraham as a charm in casting out evil spirits.[2] Not the Jews alone but almost all who employed incantations and magical rites use the formula—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.[3] Now who were these men, and where is their history recorded? Not in any Greek or barbarian history or myth, but in the Book of Genesis. Do not the works accomplished by the names establish the divine character of the men? And yet we only read of them in the sacred books of the Jews. The same holds of other formulas drawn from the Scripture narrative.[4]

4. In seeking to establish the separate nationality of the Jews, and their claims to be the chosen people of God, the argument of Origen reaches a high level. To all cavilling at the divine mission of the Jews, Origen replies by pointing to their monotheism. The greatness of the Jews lay in their having a clear apprehension of the existence of One, Sovereign, Personal God. By believing in One Sovereign God they were true philosophers, as without this fundamental truth no understanding of the universe is possible; by presenting to men the possibility of personal communion with this Personal Sovereign God,

[1] iv. 95, 93. [2] i. 22. [3] iv. 33. [4] iv. 34.

they proclaimed the true ideal of religion; by making holiness the condition of that communion, they linked religion and ethics indissolubly together. These thoughts, under various forms, occur repeatedly in the apology of Origen.

If the Jews were Egyptians, as Celsus averred, they must have changed their dialect when their revolt took place: those who had hitherto spoken the Egyptian tongue all at once gained complete mastery over the dialect of the Hebrews![1] In that case their names would have been Egyptian, for names and languages are correlated; but the names are Hebrew.[2] The whole economy of the Jews, and their venerable and ancient polity, were of God.[3] Before they acted insolently towards God, and were abandoned by Him, they were a philosophic nation.[4] Any close observer of their polity may see that they exhibited upon earth the "pattern of a heavenly life."[5] By their recognition of no God save the God over all—by the banishment of painters and makers of images from the community—by abstaining from the worship of the hosts of heaven—by the expulsion of effeminate persons and harlots—by the high, almost superhuman, standard of morals and integrity which they exacted from their judges, the divine character of the nation was manifested. "There could be seen a whole nation given to

[1] iii. 6. [2] iii. 8 [3] vi. 80. [4] viii. 47.
[5] *ἄνθρωποι σκιὰν οὐρανίου βίου παραδεικνύντες ἐπὶ γῆς*—iv. 31.

philosophy.[1] To secure leisure for hearing the divine laws, they had their Sabbaths and other festivals. Why speak of the arrangements about priests and sacrifices, which shadow forth countless truths to those given to study?"[2] A comparison of the Jewish polity with that of other nations compels admiration of the former. Everything not useful to the race of men was taken from them; everything beneficial was admitted. They had neither games, nor dramatic contests, nor horse-races. They had no women who sold their beauty. From their tenderest years they were taught the blessing of rising above all sensible nature, and seeking God far above all things material. Almost from birth, and as soon as they could speak perfectly, they learned the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, of rewards and punishments hereafter—in a veiled and mystic form, no doubt, as to those who were children in understanding. As the "portion of the Lord" they despised soothsayers, and sought their knowledge of the future in the souls of those who, because of their pre-eminent purity, received the Spirit of the God over all.[3] What need to point out the reasonableness of the law that no one who adhered to the Jewish system should be a slave for more than six years? The Jews would consider that they were insensible to the excellence of their own law if they thought that it had been enacted in the same way as

[1] καὶ ἦν ἰδεῖν ἔθνος ὅλον φιλοσοφοῦν—iv. 31. [2] iv. 31. [3] v. 42.

the laws that obtain among other nations. They know of a wisdom not only higher than that of the many, but even than that of those who seem to be philosophers; for the latter, after all their venerable discourses, fall back to idols and demons, while the lowest of the Jews look to the one God who is over all: and on this account they have good reason to be proud, and to shun intercourse with others as polluted. And would that they had not sinned by slaying the prophets, and afterwards by plotting against Jesus; for in that case there would have been seen on earth the pattern of a heavenly city such as Plato sought to delineate.[1] Because they were a chosen people and a royal priesthood, they were isolated, and avoided intercourse with others to prevent the corruption of their morals. They neither sought power by extending their boundaries, nor did their smallness expose them to attack, because they were protected by God. The guidance of God was accorded to them so long as they were worthy of it: when they sinned they were abandoned—now for a longer period, now for a shorter—until, in the time of the Romans, by their commission of the greatest sin in slaying Jesus, they were utterly forsaken.[2]

[1] v. 43.

[2] iv. 32. In evidence of the divine protection, Origen points out that the Supreme God is called the God of the Hebrews even by those alien from the Christian faith, and quotes some legendary stories of the homage paid to the Jewish high priest by Alexander of Macedon —ii. 50.

The most powerful argument for the divine guidance of the Jews, as well as for the divinity of their sacred books, is to be found in their prophets and prophecies. Scripture has a demonstration peculiar to itself, and of a diviner character than that furnished by Greek dialectic. "This diviner method was called by St Paul the 'demonstration of the Spirit and of power': of the Spirit, because of the prophecies, especially those with regard to the Christ, which should suffice to convince those that read them; of power, because of the miraculous powers whose reality has been established by many other proofs, and also from the traces of them yet preserved in those who live according to the precepts of the Gospel."[1] The Messianic prophecies will be discussed in connection with Origen's defence of Jesus; here we only present his view of prophetic testimony in general, and of its place and function in Judaism.

Every form of foreknowledge does not infallibly suggest a divine source. There is a foreknowledge which is in itself indifferent: it is not always an evidence of divinity, and may belong to the bad as well as to the excellent.[2] Pilots can foretell storms, physicians can foretell the course of disease in virtue of their professional skill, whether their morals be

[1] i. 2.

[2] *τὸ τὰ μέλλοντα προγιγνώσκειν οὐ πάντως θεῖον ἐστι· καθ' αὑτὸ γὰρ μέσον ἐστι*—iv. 96. Cf. vii. 5; iii. 25.

good or bad.[1] But though for controversial purposes Origen thus minimises the function of foreknowledge, he repeatedly says that prophecies are to be tested by their issues, and that foreknowledge is a convincing proof of the possession of a divine spirit.[2] The announcement of future events beyond the power of human nature to foretell, when verified by the results, is the mark of divinity.[3] The fulfilment of prophecies in regard to events which are past should induce us to believe the prophets, or rather the Divine Spirit in them, in regard to events yet future.[4]

The prophets of the Jews are clearly marked out from all the givers of heathen oracles. They were not driven into an ecstasy or frenzied condition when they prophesied.[5] They were the first to enjoy the advent of the higher Spirit into them, and by the touch of the Holy Spirit their understanding gained in clearness and their soul in brightness.[6] Some received the prophetic gift and inspiration because of their wisdom; others became wise when illumined by the gift of prophecy. To them God intrusted His Spirit and words because of the inimitable character of their lives, their high standard of moral force, nobility, and intrepidity.[7] Their insight was of the nature of a higher sense, by

[1] iv. 96.
[2] i. 35; viii. 48; vi. 46.
[3] *τὸ γὰρ χαρακτηρίζον τὴν θεότητα*—vi. 10.
[4] iv. 21.
[5] *Ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ εἰς ἔκστασιν καὶ μανικὴν ἄγειν κατάστασιν τὴν δῆθεν προφητεύουσαν . . . οὐ θείου πνεύματος ἔργον ἐστίν*—vii. 3.
[6] vii. 4.
[7] vii. 7.

which they could see things higher than bodies, and hear sounds other than those which have their substance in the air.[1] The preservation of their sayings by their contemporaries shows the value attached to them: the disappearance of other so-called prophecies points as plainly in the opposite direction.[2]

It is a favourite idea of Origen that the existence among the Jews of prophets, in the sense of foretellers, was a necessity. If their national coherence was to be secured, if their faith in the Creator was to be preserved, and all inducements for revolting to polytheism removed, prophets were absolutely necessary. The Jews were forbidden to practise the auguries in use among the Gentiles; and when a natural longing to know the future took possession of them, they would have despised their own prophets if they had seemed to possess no evidence of divinity, and would have had recourse to heathen soothsayers. On this account it is in no way monstrous that the prophets should not only have foretold universal events relating to Christ and the kingdoms of the world, but particular matters of no great moment.[3] This somewhat grotesque fancy may contain a truth. He may mean that revelation at every stage was always superior to the thought of the age, even when it was limited by it. In an age which believed in augury, it was an advance when a man took the place of some bird or animal as the interpreter of

[1] i. 48. [2] vii. 10, 11. [3] i. 36, 37. Cf. iii. 2.

the divine will. He strikes a higher note by suggesting that in the case of a nation to whom a partial revelation, in the form of a law, had been given, a succession of prophets, in the sense of teachers, was natural. It was only natural that God did not overlook a people who served Him and suffered because of the homage they gave to His laws, and that He gave a revelation of Himself to men who despised the works of human art and strove to ascend in thought to the God over all. It was right that the common Father and Creator of all should apportion to those who sought and served Him some fruit of His sway, and should grant unto them continuous and increasing knowledge of Himself.[1]

5. Origen expressly acknowledges the dependence of Christianity on Judaism. The sacred books of Moses and the prophets serve as an introduction to Christianity, and afterwards advance is made by Christians in their explanation and interpretation, as they seek out "the mystery according to revelation which has been kept silent in eternal times."[2] The Spirit in the prophets was no other than the Spirit of Christ.[3] Jesus is the Son of Him who gave the law and the prophets.[4] The Christian Church owed its origin to God in the prophets teaching men to expect the coming of Christ to save men. And in so far as that fact is not really refuted, is the Word established as the Word

[1] *Ἵνα μᾶλλον αὔξωσιν ἣν ἅπαξ παρειλήφασι περὶ αὐτοῦ ἔννοιαν*—viii. 53.
[2] ii. 4. Cf. Rom. xvi. 25. [3] vi. 19. [4] ii. 6.

of God, and Jesus shown to be the Son of God both before His incarnation and when He became incarnate.[1] We agree with the Jews as to the inspiration of their Scriptures, but differ as to their interpretation.[2] We can defend them by a better apology than the Jews themselves can furnish, because we have a more intelligent apprehension of their meaning.[3] Jews who become Christians do not dishonour the law of their fathers. In the narrative in 'Acts' of his intercourse with Cornelius, as well as by what is indicated in the Epistle to the Galatians, we see how Peter had to be taught to ascend from the letter of the law to the spirit.[4] Christ was unable to teach His disciples "many things" in the true law, and the heavenly realities of which the Jewish service was only a type and a shadow. Had He sought before the fitting time to root out opinions which were a part of their very being, and which they held to be divine, it would have tended to overturn their belief in Him as the Christ.[5] We, then, who are "of the Church," do not transgress the law, but escape the mythologies of the Jews by being instructed in the mystic understanding of the law and the prophets.[6] The law has a twofold sense — one according to the letter, one according to the thought.[7] By means of this principle Origen seeks to

[1] iii. 14. [2] v. 60. [3] ii. 76. [4] ii. 1. [5] ii. 2. [6] ii. 6.
[7] ὁ νόμος διττός ἐστιν· ὁ μέν τις πρὸς ῥητὸν, ὁ δὲ πρὸς διάνοιαν— vii. 20.

show that there was no antagonism between Moses and Christ. In interpreting the law literally Celsus was subject to a very vulgar delusion.[1] How could the wealth promised by Moses be material wealth, when the sight of many righteous men in extreme poverty showed to the people the incredibility of such a message? Would they have retained their faith and contended for the law, when they saw that according to the letter he had plainly deceived them?[2] The riches promised is spiritual insight, riches in all word and knowledge.[3] The precept about slaying enemies cannot be taken literally. How could the Psalmist, for example, after giving expression to manly and good thoughts, add a resolution to cut off all sinners from the earth "in the morning"?[4] The children of Babylon who are to be dashed to pieces are confusing thoughts, the offspring of evil.[5] The promised land was not the land of Judea; for it, like the rest of the world, is under a curse, and could not be such as Moses described it.[6] Moreover, for some of the precepts of Jesus quoted by Celsus, passages exactly parallel could be quoted from the Old Testament: some of the promises to the Jews have been fulfilled to the letter.[7]

[1] *πέπονθε δὴ . . . πρᾶγμα ἰδιωτικώτατον*.—vii. 18.
[2] vii. 18. [3] vii. 21. [4] vii. 19. Cf. Ps. ci. 8.
[5] vii. 22. Cf. Ps. cxxxvii. 9. [6] vii. 28.
[7] The prophecy about the whole earth being filled with the seed of the Hebrews has been fulfilled; though the literal fulfilment has come rather from the wrath of God than from His granting a blessing—vii. 19.

When untrammelled by his allegorical theorising Origen displays keen insight into the true relation of the older faith to Christianity, the causes of its decline, and the necessity of its being superseded. The Judaic polity was not exempt from that instability which governs all the affairs of men, and gradually gave way to corruption and degeneracy. The venerable system was remodelled by God so as to be adapted to all men everywhere.[1] The Jewish laws were adapted only to one nation, whose princes were of their own kindred and kept similar customs; the new laws are in harmony with every existing constitution in every part of the world.[2] With the continuance of the polity according to the letter of the Mosaic law, the calling of the Gentiles who were under the sway of the Romans would have been impossible; nor could the Jews obey the law of the Gospel had their polity remained unchanged. Christians, for example, may not slay their enemies, nor can the Jews now do so; but to deprive the ancient Jews of such power would have been fatal to their existence. The destruction of their city, and with it their temple and temple service, proves that God, who gave both the Law and the Gospel, does not wish the Jews to prevail.[3] Christ came to reform the whole world.[4] By His teaching He invites all to the pure

[1] iv. 32.

[2] *νόμους καινοὺς καὶ ἁρμόζοντας τῇ πανταχοῦ καθεστώσῃ πολιτείᾳ*—iv. 22.

[3] vii. 26.

[4] iv. 9.

service of God, and in order to benefit many, He abrogated the burdensome code of external ordinances, which was an obstacle to the acceptance of Judaism.[1] The divine favour once granted to the Jews has passed to the Christians; the Romans have failed to exterminate them; for a divine hand fights for them, whose will it is to scatter the seed from one corner in the land of Judea throughout the whole world.[2] The kingdom of heaven has passed from them to the Gentiles, and all the tenets of the Jews of to-day are only myths and trifles.[3] They no longer possess prophets, or signs, or other evidence of divinity; but such signs are with the Christians: "we speak from experience."[4] In brief, Origen's position was this: Judaism, alike in its constitution and in its ceremonial code, was essentially a national religion; Christianity is a universal and spiritual religion. The Christian is not concerned with the letter, but only with the spiritual truth, of Mosaism. There is no more conflict between them than was inevitable in the elimination of temporary and accidental elements from Judaism, on its transformation from a local into a world-wide religion, from a religion of ceremonies into a religion of principles.[5]

[1] viii. 24. [2] v. 50.
[3] *πάντα μὲν τὰ Ἰουδαίων τῶν νῦν μύθους καὶ λήρους*—ii. 5.
[4] ii. 8. [5] Cf. Tertull. Adv. Judæos, c. 4. 6.

CHAPTER III.

DEFENCE OF THE INCARNATION.

Celsus made an elaborate attack on the doctrine of an Incarnation. He maintained that it was impossible, alike because of the nature of God Himself and His relation to the universe; that its professed end—the salvation of sinners—was a chimæra; that it assumed a divine relation to man and a dignity in him which was incompatible with man's real insignificance; and that the time and method adopted were unworthy of the goodness and greatness of God.

I. The contention of Celsus that the conception of a divine descent was monstrous is disproved by the popular beliefs in all countries about the visitation of the earth by gods.[1] When Celsus asked whether God could not have reformed men without coming down Himself, or sending His Son, to what method of reformation did he allude? "Did he mean that the minds of men should be so impressed by a divine vision that wicked-

[1] v. 2.

ness would be at once taken away and virtue implanted? If that were possible, what becomes of our free-will? Or how should we praise assent to truth or aversion from falsehood?"[1]

The predicate of change does not apply to the omnipresent God.[2] God is higher than any place, and embraces in Himself everything whatsoever.[3] When men change their position or condition, the previous state comes to an end; but it is not so with Him. "Although the God of the universe by His own power should descend along with Jesus into the life of men, and although the Word who was 'in the beginning with God and was God' Himself should come to us, He does not leave His own seat, nor leave His place void and fill one which formerly did not contain Him.[4] The power and divinity of God comes through whom He wills, and in whom it finds a place. Though we speak of His leaving one place and filling another, we do not declare this topically;[5] but we will say that the soul of the man who is evil is abandoned by God, and the soul of him who wishes to live according to virtue becomes a participator in the Divine Spirit." The descent of God, therefore, did not involve the

[1] iv. 3. [2] Cf. Tert. De Carne Christi, c. 3. [3] vii. 34.

[4] Κἂν ὁ θεὸς τοίνυν τῶν ὅλων τῇ ἑαυτοῦ δυνάμει συγκαταβαίνῃ τῷ Ἰησοῦ εἰς τὸν τῶν ἀνθρώπων βίον . . . οὐκ ἔξεδρος γίνεται, οὐδὲ καταλείπει τὴν ἑαυτοῦ ἕδραν· ὥς τινα μὲν τόπον κενὸν αὐτοῦ εἶναι, ἕτερον δὲ πλήρη, οὐ πρότερον αὐτὸν ἔχοντα—iv. 5.

[5] περὶ τόπου (idem).

abandonment of a greater seat.[1] Abiding unchanged in substance, He condescends to the affairs of men in providence.[2] The Incarnation of the Word in Jesus does not imply that His rays were confined to that alone, or that the Light which was able to produce these rays was nowhere else.[3] "That which descended among men was 'in the form of God,' and through love of man He humbled Himself that He might be accessible to men.[4] He suffered no change from good to evil, for He knew no sin; nor from blessedness to misery, for He was none the less blessed when He humbled Himself for the advantage of our race." The immortal God—the Word—by the assumption of a mortal body and a human soul is not changed nor transformed, but abiding the same in substance, suffers none of those things which the body or the soul suffers.[5] Yet the descent of the Word was no mere docesis, but a true manifestation.[6] Here and there on this subject the language of Origen is somewhat vague and fluctuating: some of his illustrations support not a real but a dynamical indwelling of God in man; they prove the possibility of a theophany rather than an Incarnation.

The Incarnation does show a desire on the part of God to be known by man, but not a desire based on

[1] iv. 5. [2] iv. 14; v. 12. [3] vii. 17.

[4] Τὸ δὲ καταβεβηκὸς εἰς ἀνθρώπους, ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ ὑπῆρχε· καὶ διὰ φιλανθρωπίαν ἑαυτὸν ἐκένωσεν ἵνα χωρηθῆναι ὑπ' ἀνθρώπων δυνηθῇ— iv. 15. [5] iv. 15. [6] iv. 18.

the petty grounds assigned by Celsus. The Father was not known before the coming of Christ. Only God the Word can lead up the soul of man to the God over all. "Because of those who were joined to the flesh and were as flesh, the Word became flesh,[1] that He might be apprehended by those who were not able to look upon Him as the Word and God. Announcing Himself as flesh, He summoned those who were flesh, that after forming them according to the Word who became incarnate, He might lead them to see the Word as He was before He became incarnate."[2] In great philanthropy the Word voluntarily condescended to the level of the human lot for the good of men.[3] By sending His Christ, God frees from all wretchedness those who believe and admit His divinity, and takes away all ground of excuse from those who do not believe.[4]

There is no absurdity in supposing that God came down to purify the world. Being God, He cannot but seek to put a stop to the spread of wickedness, and renew the world.[5] But from the necessity of such purification or renewal, it does not follow that God created the world without art, in a defective way. "At the creation of the universe all things were arranged by Him in perfect beauty; yet none the less

[1] διὰ τοὺς κολληθέντας τῇ σαρκὶ καὶ γενομένους ὅπερ σὰρξ, ἐγένετο σὰρξ—vi. 68.

[2] vi. 68. [3] iv. 17, 18. [4] iv. 6.

[5] Οὐ γὰρ κατὰ τὸν θεόν ἐστι, μὴ στῆναι τὴν τῆς κακίας νομὴν καὶ ἀνακαινῶσαι τὰ πράγματα—iv. 20.

is it necessary for Him to apply a certain healing art to those who are sick with wickedness, and to the whole world which is infected by it. God never has neglected nor will neglect His world; but at each season He does what it behoves Him to do, as it becomes altered or out of joint. Like the husbandman who at different seasons of the year performs different labours in the earth, God orders whole æons as years,[1] so to speak, and does at each whatever is itself reasonable in the interests of the whole. By God alone is the whole truly and clearly apprehended and carried out to perfection."[2]

II. Upon the Christian conception of the coming of the Son of God to save sinners, Celsus cast the most savage scorn. He scoffed at penitence as a flattering of God or an invocation of His pity; he maintained that moral reformation was impossible, that evil was a necessity.

Would any one censure a philanthropic monarch for sending a physician to the sick in the city? Why then should we censure God for sending His Word as a physician to sinners? To those who had ceased to sin He came not as a physician but as a teacher of divine mysteries. "No man—save the man in Christ Jesus—is sinless in the sense of never having sinned."[3] The Gospel gives no special preference to sinners.

[1] *ὁ θεὸς οἱονεὶ ἐνιαυτούς τινας—ἵν' οὕτως ὀνομάσω—οἰκονομεῖ ὅλους τοὺς αἰῶνας*—iv. 69

[2] Idem.

[3] iii. 62.

But if a man is conscious of sin and in penitence humbles himself, he is preferred before one who has no consciousness of sin and is puffed up because of some seeming excellences. There is no blasphemy in saying that in comparison with the greatness of God every man is conscious of shortcomings, and that we should always ask God to supply that which is defective in our own nature.[1] Moreover, it is not mere penitence, but penitence attended by a moral change, that God demands. Virtue entering into the soul drives out the wickedness which was in possession. The wickedness disappears in proportion to the advance of virtue.[2]

In denying that it was possible for man to recover virtue, Celsus lied not only against Christians, but against the nobler teachers of philosophy. "Though all men are born with a tendency to sin, and some in addition to this natural bias have become sinners by habit, yet not all are incapable of receiving a complete transformation." For in every school of philosophy, as well as in the divine Word, you find the record of men who were so changed that they became patterns of the highest life.[3] Phædo and Polemon may be cited as illustrations of sinners who turned philosophers.[4] Some diseases and wounds of the body are beyond the power of all medical science; but there is no evil in souls which it is impossible for the Logos to cure.[5]

[1] iii. 64. [2] iii. 71. [3] iii. 66. [4] iii. 67.
[5] πάντων γὰρ τῶν ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ κακῶν δυνατώτερος ὢν ὁ λόγος—viii. 72.

The nature of every rational soul is the same; none has been created evil by the Creator of all. In the case of many, by reason of their education, or their intercourse with others, or their environment, evil is almost naturalised; yet to transform even such by the divine Word is not very hard—still less impossible. The will in such creates the difficulty; for it is slow to admit that God is a just Judge of all that is done in life. Will and practice can achieve what is next to impossible. "Is it in the power of a man by diligent practice to walk on a rope stretched aloft in the midst of a theatre, carrying heavy weights, but impossible for a nature formerly very bad to live according to virtue? What is this but to bring a charge against the Creator in regard to the nature of the rational animal rather than against the thing created, if man can do things so difficult that serve no good end, but finds it impossible to do so for his own blessedness."[1]

It is not easy even for philosophers to understand the origin of evil, nor can they have a clear apprehension of the question unless they are taught by the inspiration of God the nature of evil, its origin, and the method of its final destruction. There is no greater evil than that which is found even in philosophers—ignorance of God and of the right way of showing piety towards Him. "The genesis of evils will not be grasped by the man who does not understand about

[1] iii. 69.

him who is called the devil, and about his angels, what he was before he became the devil, how he became a devil, and how he made his angels apostatise along with him. It is essential further to understand the nature of demons, that they are not the creations of God so far as they are demons, but only in so far as they are rational, and to know how in their demonic conditions their mind exists."[1] The doctrine of the Evil Spirit and his fall from heaven is set forth in the writings of Moses and Ezekiel.[2] Stripped of its mystical language about the wings of the soul and their sustenance by the living bread, the teaching of Origen seems substantially to be this. God alone is essentially good: any other, whether Satan or man, is good only by accident or communication. By close fellowship with God one may always preserve this accidental or communicated good; if he fails, it is because he has neglected to use the means appointed for its preservation. The first who lost this divine gift and fell from blessedness was Satan, the adversary; and every one is a Satan who chooses wickedness, for he is an adversary of the Son of God, who is Righteousness, Truth, and Wisdom. Evil is used by God as a gymnasium for those who are "striving lawfully" for the recovery of virtue.[3] Evil is not from God, nor is matter the

[1] ὅτι τε μή εἰσι, καθὸ δαίμονές εἰσι, δημιουργήματα τοῦ θεοῦ, ἀλλὰ μόνον καθὸ λογικοί τινες· καὶ . . . ἐν καταστάσει δαιμόνων αὐτῶν ὑποστῆναι τὸ ἡγεμονικόν—iv. 65.

[2] vi. 43.

[3] vi. 44.

cause of it. "The mind of each is the cause of the wickedness that exists in him, which is the evil; and the actions that spring from it are evil; and according to us, to speak accurately, nothing else is evil."[1] Evil takes place according to the will of God in the sense that God does not prevent it. A distinction must be made between that which is due directly to the providence of God and that which results from His providence.[2] Though God created the world, it does not follow that He created that which is evil; for what is evil is only by way of consequence and dependence on the original design.[3] God cannot do that which is evil, just as that whose natural property it is to sweeten cannot embitter, or that whose natural property it is to produce light cannot produce darkness. The potentiality of doing evil is contrary to His Godhead and omnipotence.[4] If things really evil were made by God, how could men preach with boldness a final judgment? No doubt some passages in the Scriptures about God's relation to evil may perplex the ignorant. "Of evils properly so called God is not the author; but some things, few in comparison with the harmonious arrangement of the whole, have followed His principal works, just as shavings and sawdust attend the works

[1] iv. 66.
[2] vii. 68.
[3] ἐκ παρακολουθήσεως γεγένηται τῆς πρὸς τὰ προηγούμενα—vi. 53.
[4] iii. 70.

of the carpenter: God's relation to such evils is like that of the architect to the rubbish and plaster that lie round the building like filth."[1]

This analogy might seem to suggest that evils were a necessary element in the development of order, but against such a misunderstanding Origen guards himself. He strongly contends against the idea of Celsus, that evils are in their own nature infinite, and that they never have been, nor are, nor will be, less or more. Just as those who maintain the incorruptibility of the world say that the equilibrium of the elements is preserved by the providence of God, who prevents any one element from exceeding another, so Celsus would teach that a kind of Providence presides over evils which are so many in number, to prevent them becoming more or less! History shows that various forms of evil exist now that did not once exist. Chrysippus tells us, for example, that at first prostitutes were masked and kept outside the city, that afterwards they cast off their masks, and that later they entered into the city.[2]

"Though the nature of the universe is one and the same, it does not at all follow that the genesis of evils is one and the same. The nature of any one is one and the same, but his mind, reason, and actions are

[1] vi. 55.

[2] iv. 63. Did Celsus maintain, as Origen supposes, that the amount not only of evil as a whole, but of each separate evil, neither increased nor diminished?

not the same. At one time a man has not gained the possession of reason, at another time more or less wickedness exists along with it; at another he is stimulated towards virtue, at another, after varied length of contemplation, he advances towards virtue itself." In like manner, though the nature of the universe is one and the same, neither the same things nor things of the same kind always happen in it; neither fertile seasons nor barren seasons, neither rains nor drought, occur continually. The same holds true in regard to souls; they have no fixed seasons of fertility or barrenness. Providence purifies the earth and prevents the amount of evil from abiding the same.[1]

Along with his theory of the permanence and necessity of evil Celsus held that all things keep going in a circuit. "If this be true, our free-will is annihilated.[2] It will follow, moreover, that Socrates will always be a philosopher, and be accused of bringing in foreign deities and corrupting the young! And Anytus and Melitus will always accuse him, and the Council in the Areopagus condemn him to death by hemlock! So Moses at the appointed periods will come out of Egypt with the people of the Jews, and Jesus will again dwell with men and do the same things which He has done not once but an infinite number of times at fixed periods! And Christians will be the same at the appointed cycles, and Celsus

[1] iv. 64. [2] ὅπερ ἐὰν ᾖ ἀληθὲς, τὸ ἐφ' ἡμῖν ἀνῄρηται—iv. 67.

will again write his book which he has written before countless times!"[1] The Stoic modification of this view is open to the same objection. Not Socrates, they say, but one altogether unchanged from Socrates, will come again. But, if persons or things are unchanged, they must be the same.[2]

There is a semblance of piety in the saying of Celsus that seeming evil may be for the good of the whole. But though God without interfering with the free-will of each may use the wickedness of the worthless man so as to promote the interests of the whole, yet none the less is such an one to be censured. The man who, because of certain transgressions, has been condemned to engage in public works useful to the community, is no doubt doing that which is useful to the whole city; but no man of moderate intelligence would wish to take part in such works.[3] The overruling of evil does not alter the nature of the evil itself.

III. The doctrine of the Incarnation assumes that there is a close affinity between God and man, and in virtue of that affinity that man has a unique place in the universe. Celsus saw this with great clearness, and sought to disprove this peculiar relationship and pre-eminence, by asserting that there was no difference between the body of a man and a frog, that in some respects animals had the advantage of man, that any

[1] iv. 67. [2] iv. 68. [3] iv. 70.

institution which seemed to support his claim to superiority had its parallel in the actions of some animal or another, and that some animals had a closer affinity to God than he. God cares for the whole, and not specially for any individual component.

Origen maintains as against Celsus the dignity of the human body. The nature of the body is not polluted;[1] for when consecrated to God it is His temple.[2] Because of the soul which dwelt in it the body of a man is not to be cast out but treated with respect.[3] The body as well as the soul is the work of God. The great art displayed in the bodies of animals proves, as the Stoics show, that they are the work of the Primal Intelligence. "A Perfect Intelligence is manifested by the qualities implanted in the nature of plants, and by the ministration of animals to man—apart from any other end for which they may exist. If the soul alone be the work of God, and to inferior gods be delegated the creation of all forms of bodies—how shall we explain the diversity of the gods of each created thing?" If Celsus had truly studied and examined each thing, he would have observed that it was one God, the Creator of all things, who has made everything an end in itself and yet related to some other end, and that there is nothing absurd in the conception of a world consisting of things unlike having been made by one Architect who has formed different species for the good of

[1] iii. 42. [2] iv. 26. [3] v. 24.

the whole.[1] "If there be a correspondence between the body and the soul of an animal, the body whose soul is the work of God must differ from the body in which dwells a soul which is not the work of God."[2] For if buildings are considered pure or polluted according to the purpose for which they are adapted, it would be monstrous that bodies of men should not differ according as they are inhabited by the virtuous or the worthless. It is on this ground that men have sometimes deified the bodies of the more excellent, and treated with dishonour the bodies of the vicious. In no case, indeed, was this done with sound judgment, but a sound notion lay at the root of it. Would any wise man bury with equal reverence the body of Socrates and Anytus, or give both the same monument?[3]

The degree of permanence to be assigned to the matter that underlies all phenomena will depend on our conclusions as to whether matter is uncreated or not.[4] "If, as Celsus says, 'nothing born of matter is immortal,' it follows that the whole world is immortal and does not spring from matter, or it is not immortal. If it be immortal, let Celsus show that it was not produced from matter without qualities. If it be not immortal, does the world perish or not? If it perish as not being the work of God, in the perishing of the cosmos what will the soul, the work of God, do? If it does not perish, but is liable to perish and yet is not

[1] iv. 54. [2] iv. 58. [3] iv. 59. [4] iv. 53.

immortal—because capable of dying, though it does not die—it is at once mortal and immortal!" After putting Celsus into this dilemma, Origen declares that his ideas will not bear searching scrutiny.[1] The passage shows how he was hampered by his controversial attitude. His deepest thought on this subject must be sought elsewhere. In a passage preserved by Eusebius,[2] he shows with great lucidity that He who created the qualities or form must have created the matter. God is not like a carpenter who requires wood or an architect who requires stones. He who gave matter the capacity of assuming form must have created it.

No Jew or Christian would say absolutely that God made the whole cosmos and the vault of heaven especially for us.[3] Yet in harmony with the philosophers of the Porch we hold that Providence has "principally" made all things for our sake. The keepers of the markets make provision for men, while dogs and other irrational creatures reap the benefit of the abundance; and in like manner the irrational creatures in the universe reap the benefit of the abundance of good things prepared by Providence specially for man.[4] The dogs, in short, eat of the crumbs that fall from the master's table. So it is with the design and uses of day and night. Ants and flies reap the benefit

[1] iv. 61. [2] Præp. Evang., vii. 20 (Lomm., viii. 5, 6). [3] iv. 27.
[4] iv. 74. Origen uses a singular analogy to illustrate the contrast between rational and irrational creatures.

of that which has been made for the sake of men.[1] All things have been formed by the Creator to serve the rational animal. For some purposes we require dogs, for others oxen. Lions and bears and other fierce creatures are given to develop within us the seeds of manliness.[2] The filial affection of the stork may be designed to put men to the blush.[3]

The comparison of men to worms is unreasonable in view of the fact that man possesses virtues in rudimentary outline, and cannot altogether lose the seeds thereof.[4] We are forbidden by our reason, which takes its origin from the Reason who is with God,[5] to conceive of the rational creature as altogether alien from God. Nor are even bad Jews or Christians—who are not really Jews or Christians—to be compared to worms. It is a calumny on human nature which has been formed for virtue to employ such a comparison.[6] Man's relation to God, as exhibited in a piety which neither toil nor danger of death can conquer, his relation to himself as seen in the mastery of that sexual appetite which enervates the souls of many, the justice and philanthropy revealed in his relation to others, prove the monstrosity of such a com-

[1] iv. 77. [2] iv. 78. [3] iv. 98.

[4] Αὗται γὰρ αἱ πρὸς ἀρετὴν ὑποτυπώσεις οὐκ ἐῶσι σκώληκι παραβάλλεσθαι τοὺς δυνάμει ἔχοντας τὴν ἀρετὴν, καὶ τὰ σπέρματα αὐτῆς πάντη ἀπολέσαι οὐ δυναμένους—iv. 25.

[5] ὁ γὰρ λόγος τὴν ἀρχὴν ἔχων ἀπὸ τοῦ παρὰ θεῷ λόγου (idem).

[6] Idem.

parison.[1] Some of the speculations of Greek philosophers may be absurd, but we will not scoff at them; even to enter on the investigation of truth is an evidence of man's pre-eminence.[2]

Man is little in body. But, with truth as arbiter, excellence or defect will not be judged by a material standard; for in that case vultures and elephants will be superior to man.[3] Would one looking down from heaven on the earth consider the bodies of men and ants? "Would he not rather mark in the one case the rational mind which is moved by reflection, and in the other the irrational mind which is moved irrationally by impulse and fancy, along with a certain natural constitution? For if he looked to the spring of all impulses, he would see the difference and the excellence of man. In irrational beings he would see no other principle than irrationality; but in man he would see that reason which he has in common with divine and heavenly beings, and perhaps also with the Supreme God Himself; for man was made in the image of God, and the image of God is His reason."[4] By his possession of understanding man though feeble in body gains the mastery over animals, whether they are of a nature that can be tamed or not.[5] There is a great difference between what is accomplished by the savagery of an animal and by the understanding of a man.

[1] iv. 26. [2] iv. 30. [3] iv. 24. [4] iv. 85. [5] iv. 78.

History disproves the theory of Celsus that in the earliest ages men were the prey of beasts. From the very beginning men were under the guardianship of the higher powers.[1] This is affirmed by Hesiod not less than by Moses. Until men had made progress in intelligence and in the invention of arts and were able to live of themselves, it is probable that they received more immediate assistance from God.[2]

Man's struggle for existence is the secret of his greatness. "To develop human intelligence which otherwise would have remained without any conception of arts, God created man with many deficiencies,[3] that on account of that very deficiency he might be compelled to find out arts—some for food, some for clothing. Men were not then prepared to study divine truth and philosophy; it was better therefore for them to be in want that they might use their understanding for the invention of arts, than to neglect their understanding altogether because of an abundant supply. The want of the necessaries of life gave birth to the art of husbandry and the culture of the vine and horticulture; the tools useful for these arts gave birth to the craft of the carpenter and the smith. The want of covering introduced the art of weaving, wool-carding, and spinning; then came

[1] iv. 79. [2] iv. 80.

[3] *τὴν ἀνθρωπίνην σύνεσιν γυμνάζεσθαι βουλόμενος ὁ θεὸς ἵνα μὴ μένῃ ἀργὴ καὶ ἀνεπινόητος τῶν τεχνῶν, πεποίηκε τὸν ἄνθρωπον ἐπιδεῆ*—iv. 76.

building, and so intelligence rose to the art of architecture. To transfer the useful produce of one country to another, the art of the sailor and the pilot was created; so that on account of these things any one would admire the Providence which makes the rational animal defective in comparison with irrational animals. This defect is an advantage. For other animals have their nourishment ready at hand and a natural covering, just because they have no impulse in the direction of arts." [1]

The parallel drawn by Celsus between the actions of men and those of ants and bees does not establish their equality. They do by an irrational nature and mere constitution what man does by reason and reflection. Their principle of action is not inherent reason. They have been endowed by the "Most Ancient One, who is also the Son of God," [2] with an irrational nature which is fitted to assist those who are held to be worthy of reason. Of cities or polity, properly so called, they have none. We ought not to commend ants, but rather to admire the Divine Nature which extends as far as to the irrational animals the power to imitate, as it were, rational creatures. The aim may be to put men to shame by inducing them to be more active and frugal, and do their part as loyal citizens of the community.[3] In like manner the so-called wars of the bees may teach us how to carry on just and orderly

[1] iv. 76. [2] ὁ πρεσβύτατος δὲ καὶ υἱὸς μὲν τοῦ θεοῦ—iv. 81. [3] iv. 81.

wars, if ever they should be necessary.[1] The cells of bees are not to be compared to the cities of men, but are designed to store honey for human medicine and food. Man in this way can co-operate with God, and can accomplish not only the works of Providence, but also those of his own providence.[2] The encomium pronounced by Celsus on irrational animals only serves to magnify the work of God who has ordered all things, and to reveal the dexterity of man who by his reason can control even the gifts bestowed on irrational creatures.[3]

Incidentally Origen departs from this representation of the world as a moral primer for the guidance of man, and puts a singular objection into the mouth of one of the "simple." If we differ in no way from ants even when we assist those who are wearied with heavy burdens, why should we toil so much in vain? Might not this depreciation of human sympathy lessen our interest in our fellow-men?[4] Origen surely here misinterprets the mental view of the simple. Sympathy for the weak no doubt springs from the sense of kinship, and if you destroy that, the sympathy vanishes; but such sympathy is intensified, not lessened, by the facts adduced by Celsus.

The use of fennel by serpents, or of various antidotes by other animals, is no proof of their possession of reason. "For if these gifts were the result of reason

[1] εἴ ποτε δέοι—iv. 82. [2] Idem. [3] iv. 84. [4] iv. 83.

and not of mere constitution, one thing would not be definitely and exclusively found in serpents (or a second or third thing, if you will), and one thing in the eagle, and so on; but there would have been as many discoveries among them as among men." If they were impelled by reason, the range of their discoveries would not be so exclusive and determined.[1] Man's pre-eminence, in other words, is revealed not so much by what he has done as by his infinite possibilities.

The superiority claimed for birds and other animals, on the ground of their use in the art of divination, takes for granted that such an art exists.[2] Origen was unwilling to admit its existence lest it might lead to the abandonment of the divine oracles,[3] and does not positively say that he believed in it; but as he explains the method and source of the inspiration of mantic birds, it is clear that he had a strong bias towards belief in it.[4] Worthless demons, of the order of Titans or giants, have fallen from heaven, and wallow about the grosser parts of bodies and impure things on the earth. As they are not clothed with earthly bodies they have some insight into the future, and with the design of turning away men from the true God they enter into rapacious and wicked animals and determine the direction of their movements. There is an affinity between certain demons and particular animals; in

[1] iv. 86, 87. [2] iv. 88. [3] iv. 90.

[4] For his views on a kindred subject, see his interpretation of the action of the Magi at the advent of Jesus, i. 59, 60.

gentler creatures their power is lessened; the clearest prognostications are given from the more savage.[1] Moses classed mantic animals among the impure; in the prophets, such are always employed to symbolise the wicked.[2]

Even admitting the existence of divination, it is no evidence that the animals used for this end are superior to man—still less that they have diviner conceptions, and are more beloved by God than he. If their knowledge of the future were so great that man could profit by their over-abundance, they would foreknow attacks against themselves, and would never be captured by men or become the prey of other creatures.[3] "If they have clearer conceptions of divine things than men, they must surpass not Christians only but the Greek philosophers, for they too were men!" Celsus, therefore, should adopt them as his teachers.[4] And, without any imprecation, we may say to him—may you be beloved by God along with these animals, and become like unto those who, according to you, are more beloved by God than men![5]

Origen sums up the discussion thus: "God not only takes care of the whole—of the universe—as Celsus supposes, but besides the whole He takes special care of every rational being.[6] Providence will at no time

[1] iv. 92. [2] iv. 93. [3] iv. 90. [4] iv. 89. [5] iv. 97.

[6] *μέλει δὲ τῷ θεῷ οὐχ, ὡς Κέλσος οἴεται, μόνου τοῦ ὅλου, ἀλλὰ παρὰ τὸ ὅλον ἐξαιρέτως παντὸς λογικοῦ*—iv. 99.

abandon the whole; for, though it should become worse because of the sin of the rational animal—which is a part of the whole—He makes arrangements for purifying it, and for turning in time the whole to Himself. He is not angry because of apes or flies; but to men, inasmuch as they have not kept themselves within their natural impulses,[1] He applies justice and punishment, and threatens them through the prophets, and through the Saviour, who was present in the world for the benefit of the whole race of men. When He threatens, it is with a twofold object. He aims at the conversion of those who hear; and in the case of those who pay no heed to His words, He applies such correction as it becomes Him who wills the good of the whole universe."[2]

If we set aside some temporary elements that are naturally found both in Celsus and Origen, they severally represent the two opposite conceptions that have always been held in regard to the place of man in the universe. The dividing line is the conception that is formed of evil, or rather of sin. In the judgment of Celsus, the universe is a perfect universe, so far as, and inasmuch as, it is the work of God. God is only interested in the whole, and in any part as a part of the whole. Whatever imperfection there may seem to be is due to the material of which the universe

[1] ἅτε παραβᾶσι τὰς φυσικὰς ἀφορμὰς—iv. 99. [2] Idem.

is formed, and is therefore no accident, but inwrought into the very constitution of things. Hence there is no moral disorder requiring the intervention of God: sin being non-existent or necessary, salvation is superfluous or impossible. In the thought of Origen the universe is a unity. This unity it owes to the one God who is its Creator and Governor. True unity implies not only a relation of each part to the whole, but of each part to other parts. The universe, then, is not a mere conglomeration of coexistent objects, but of objects correlated and interrelated. Man is the centre of the universe, in so far as he is the head of created things: all creatures are related to the cosmos, but have besides a relation of subordination to him; and he, while related to them, stands in a unique relation to God. That affinity is the source of God's peculiar interest in man. As God orders the whole, He cannot but put an end to disorder; the rational being by transgressing his natural limits has introduced moral confusion. To check this disorder, God revealed Himself to men, in all by writing His law on their hearts, in an especial manner through the Jewish prophets, and finally in His Son who became incarnate in the fulness of time.

IV. Celsus cavilled at the time of the Incarnation as well as at the method adopted. Why had there been so long delay in the coming of God? Why did He think

of making men righteous after so many ages of indifference to their needs? When He woke up, like Zeus in the comedy, after a long sleep, and resolved to save men from evil, why did He send His Spirit into one corner, and become incarnate in one individual, and that one a Jew?

In the divine judgments, replies Origen, there is no doubt an element of mystery, which serves to explain the erring of the uninstructed. God never sleeps, but administers the affairs of the world at the right times, as reason demands.[1] The time chosen for the coming of Christ is an illustration of the method of the divine government. "By the peace which began at His birth God prepared the nations for the teaching of Christ. The universal sway of the Romans rendered more easy the diffusion of the Gospel. The existence of many separate kingdoms would have acted as a hindrance. Jesus was born in the reign of Augustus, by whom the many kingdoms on earth were levelled into one. Had there been many instead of one, men would have been compelled to take service on behalf of their country. How then was it possible for that doctrine, which inculcated peace and even forbade men to repel the attacks of enemies, to gain the mastery, unless at the coming of Christ the whole world everywhere had been transformed into a gentler mood?"[2] On the deeper reasons

[1] *κατὰ καιροὺς οἰκονομεῖ τὰ τοῦ κόσμου πράγματα ὁ θεὸς, ὡς ἀπαιτεῖ τὸ εὔλογον*—vi. 79.

[2] ii. 30.

suggested by the inner history of human thought Origen does not here touch; he finds sufficient evidence of divine ordering in this—that the promulgation of a universal religion was coincident with the establishment of a universal empire, that a gospel of peace was fittingly inaugurated in a period of peace.

The salvation of mankind was no divine afterthought. There never was a time when God did not seek to make men righteous. He has always exercised forethought for this end, by giving men opportunities of following after virtue. "For in each generation, the Wisdom of God passing into souls which it finds to be holy makes them friends and prophets of God."[1] The Sacred Books tell of such holy men who were capable of receiving the Holy Spirit.[2] The power to receive the divine force being determined by the measure of holiness, is it in any way wonderful that some prophets, by reason of having lived for many years a life of sinewy and vigorous morality, should have excelled their contemporaries or successors? "And so it is not wonderful that there was a time when something of choice excellence came to the race of men, which surpassed those before and those after it."[3] Not that the

[1] Cf. Wisdom, vii. 27.

[2] iv. 7.

[3] *οὕτω δὲ οὐ θαυμαστὸν, καί τινα καιρὸν γεγονέναι ὅτ' ἐξαίρετόν τι χρῆμα ἐπιδεδήμηκε τῷ γένει τῶν ἀνθρώπων, καὶ διαφέρον παρὰ τοὺς προγενεστέρους αὐτοῦ, ἢ καὶ μεταγενεστέρους*—iv. 8.

beneficent activity of the Son of God began at His incarnation. For the Son of God, the 'first-born of every creature,' though He seemed to become incarnate recently, is not at all on that account new."[1] We do not excessively reverence "Him who lately appeared," as if He had not existed before. "He called Himself 'the Truth,' and none of us is so stupid as to suppose that the substance of truth did not exist before the times of the manifestation of Christ."[2] He has always been a benefactor to mankind. For nothing beautiful has ever been done among men without the entrance of the divine Word into the souls of those who are able though only for a little to receive His energy. The coming of Jesus into one corner was in accordance with reason. It was necessary that He who had been the subject of prophecy should come to those who had learned of the true God, and by reading His prophets had been taught about the Christ who was proclaimed.[3] For the enlightenment of the whole world by the Word of God there was no necessity for many bodies and many spirits like that of Jesus. For, being the "Sun of Righteousness," the one Word sufficed; rising in Judea it was able to send its rays to the souls of all who were willing to receive Him.[4] Neither then, in the time nor in the method of the incarnation, was anything capricious or arbitrary. Not then for the

[1] v. 37. [2] viii. 12. [3] vi. 78. [4] vi. 79.

first time did God seek men. The energy of the divine Word is the source of all enlightenment and moral culture. Christ is not the first manifestation of the divinity, but the culminating point in a series which found in Him its completion and consummation.

CHAPTER IV.

THE PERSON AND WORK OF CHRIST.

As, on the principles of Celsus, an incarnation was impossible, it followed that the divinity of Christ was a myth or an invention. It was asserted, no doubt, in the Gospels; but the Gospels were untrustworthy records: there were many contradictory versions: much had been invented by the disciples. God could not become incarnate without a pollution of His nature. Christ then was not born in any supernatural way, but was the offspring of an adulterous intercourse. The ascription of divinity to Him had many parallels in Greek mythology. For a God to do and suffer what He is reported to have suffered, was unworthy of Deity.

I. On the general question of the credibility of the Gospel narrative Origen points out the extreme difficulty of proving the truth of any historical event or presenting an intelligible conception of it. If a man denied, for example, that there had been a Trojan war,

because of the interweaving of impossible events in the history, how would we convince him? The fair reader will guard against deceit, and judge to what he will give credence, what he will explain allegorically, what he will disbelieve as being written with a purpose. So with regard to the Gospel history Origen does not demand from men of skill a bare and unreasonable faith, but maintains that the readers require to be impartial, and to investigate carefully, and to enter into the spirit of the writer, in order to know the purpose for which each Gospel was written.[1] He dismisses the idea of an oral tradition as incredible. They would not surely allege that the friends and pupils of Jesus transmitted the teaching of the Gospels without writing, and left His disciples without written memoirs of Him.[2] Though the Marcionites and the Valentinians have altered the text of the Gospels, that is no ground of accusation against the Word, but only against those who have dared to corrupt it. Just as the existence of Sophists or Epicureans or Peripatetics or any other false teachers is no charge against philosophy, so the action of those who alter the Gospels and introduce heresies foreign to the doctrine of Jesus furnishes no ground of accusation against true Christianity.[3]

[1] i. 42.

[2] *οὐ γὰρ δὴ τοὺς αὐτοῦ Ἰησοῦ γνωρίμους καὶ ἀκροατὰς φήσουσι χωρὶς γραφῆς τὴν τῶν εὐαγγελίων παραδεδωκέναι διδασκαλίαν*—ii. 13.

[3] ii. 27.

Forgetful, perhaps, for the moment of his own canon of historical criticism, Origen calls upon Celsus either to disbelieve or believe all the statements in the Gospels.[1] Instead of refusing to believe in the miraculous portions of the Gospels, he ought to have marked the truthful spirit of the writers, and believed them when they recorded things divine as well as matters of less moment.[2] In their love of truth and honesty they have recorded insults against Jesus; they have not omitted in their miraculous history what might thus seem to bring disgrace on the doctrine of the Christians.[3] So far as writings reveal the conscience, the disciples and eyewitnesses of the miracles of Jesus clearly show their sincerity and freedom from guile.[4] This internal testimony is confirmed by their actions. Men do not die for myths or fictions.[5] The disciples showed the genuineness of their disposition towards Jesus by enduring all hardships because of His words. Such resolution and endurance even unto death are not consistent with the theory that they invented what they narrate about their teacher, and clearly evince that they were persuaded of the truth of what they wrote.[6] In con-

[1] ii. 33.

[2] *δέον τὸ φιλάληθες ἰδόντα τῶν γραψάντων ἐκ τῆς περὶ τῶν χειρόνων ἀναγραφῆς πιστεῦσαι καὶ περὶ τῶν θειοτέρων*—i. 63.

[3] iii. 28; ii. 34.

[4] *ὁρῶντες τὸ ἀπάνουργον αὐτῶν, ὅσον ἔστιν ἰδεῖν συνείδησιν ἀπὸ γραμμάτων*—iii. 24.

[5] iii. 27.

[6] ii. 10.

trast with the legends of Dionysus, the histories of Jesus were written by eyewitnesses.[1] In the Gospel records there is nothing counterfeit, adulterated, or fictitious.[2] The theory of invention is further refuted by this consideration. Men whose minds had not been trained in the subtle sophistries of the Greek schools or in the arts of forensic rhetoric, could never have invented facts and words which had power of themselves to lead to faith and to a life in harmony with faith.[3] On this account Jesus employed such teachers of His doctrine that there might be no room for any suspicion of plausible sophisms. "For it is abundantly clear to all men of intelligence that the good faith of the writers, joined, so to speak, to their great simplicity, received a divine virtue which has accomplished far more than it seemed possible to accomplish by Greek rhetoric with its graceful diction, its elaborate style, its logical divisions and systematic order."[4]

II. A great part of the arguments of Celsus is based on an erroneous conception of the nature of the incarnation. He conceived of it as an indwelling of God in man, rather than as the assumption of a human nature by a Divine Being. He did not

[1] iii. 23.

[2] iii. 39.

[3] *δυνάμενα ἀφ' ἑαυτῶν ἔχειν τὸ πρὸς πίστιν, καὶ τὸν ἀνάλογον τῇ πίστει βίον ἀγωγόν* (idem).

[4] Idem.

think of God "emptying Himself" and becoming thereby liable to human limitations and development. A presentation of a true theory of the incarnation is accordingly the best answer to the attack of Celsus. Who and what was He who became incarnate?

He was God from the first and the Son of God, the very Word, and the very Wisdom, and the very Truth.[1] He does not partake of righteousness, but is Righteousness.[2] Even in respect of greatness He is the very image of the Father; otherwise it would not be possible to have a symmetrical and beautiful image of the unseen God.[3] He is such a Son as it is in perfect harmony with the character of God to have.[4] As our High Priest—in respect therefore of office, rather than of nature—He is midway between the nature of the Uncreated and all created things.[5] By speaking of Him as a second God, we mean only the Virtue that embraces all virtues, and the Reason that embraces every reason whatever of those things which have been made according to nature.[6] The prophets testified of Him as a God

[1] *πεπείσμεθα ἀρχῆθεν εἶναι θεὸν καὶ υἱὸν θεοῦ, οὗτος ὁ αὐτολόγος ἐστὶ καὶ ἡ αὐτοσοφία καὶ ἡ αὐτοαλήθεια*—iii. 41. Cf. v. 39.

[2] vi. 64.

[3] vi. 69.

[4] *οὐδὲ ἀνάρμοστον θεῷ τοιοῦτον υἱὸν μονογενῆ ὑφιστάντι*—viii. 14.

[5] *μεταξὺ ὄντος τῆς τοῦ ἀγενήτου καὶ τῆς τῶν γενητῶν πάντων φύσεως*—iii. 34.

[6] *ἴστωσαν, ὅτι τὸν δεύτερον θεὸν οὐκ ἄλλο τι λέγομεν ἢ τὴν περιεκτικὴν πασῶν ἀρετῶν ἀρετὴν*—v. 39.

next to the God and Father of the universe.[1] As Word, Wisdom, and Righteousness, He rules over all that are subject to Him.[2] The Father and the Son are two in person, but one in sameness of thought, in concord, and in identity of will.[3] He was the "immediate Creator" of the world.[4] The man who is no longer under the discipline of fear, but loves the good for its own sake, is a son of God; but He differs greatly from any other, inasmuch as He is, as it were, the fountain and primal source of all such sons.[5]

This Divine Being became incarnate and was born of the Virgin Mary. Isaiah had predicted this in the words, "Behold, the virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and thou shalt call His name Emmanuel." Some Jew, with sophistical command of language, may say that the Hebrew word should be rendered not "virgin" but "young woman." The contrary is proved by other passages of Scripture.[6] But, without putting stress on the Hebrew word, look to the context. God gives a "sign" to Ahaz. What sign was there in a young woman bringing forth a son? Though spoken to Ahaz it could apply to no one in his time; what was

[1] ii. 9. [2] viii. 15, 75. [3] viii. 12.

[4] *τὸν μὲν προσεχῶς δημιουργὸν.* The Father was *πρώτως δημιουργός* —vi. 60.

[5] *ὡσπερεὶ πηγή τις καὶ ἀρχὴ τῶν τοιούτων*—i. 57.

[6] Origen quotes Deut. xxii. 23. He was misled by the LXX.

said to Ahaz was said to him as the representative of the house of David.[1]

In virtue of this supernatural conception there was no pollution of the Spirit of God. As well say that the rays of the sun become polluted and do not retain their purity when they come into contact with anything of an evil odour.[2] The charge of adultery is a manifest lie. That one who was to induce both Greek and barbarian to abandon wickedness should be born not in a miraculous but in a shameful fashion, is not in accordance with reason. It may be refuted even by the theory of Plato respecting the correlation of souls and bodies. Would a soul such as His have been sent into the world by birth so disgraceful? If each soul receives a body according to its deserts, His soul would rather require a body superior to the body of all.[3] "If the body hinders or furthers the soul into which it is sent, why should there not be some soul which receives a body altogether miraculous, which has something in common with the rest of men that it may be able to live along with them, and something unique that it may continue untouched by sin?"[4] From adulterous intercourse would rather have come some fool, a curse of man-

[1] i. 34, 35. Cf. Tertull. Adv. Judæos, c. 9.

[2] vi. 73.

[3] i. 32.

[4] *ψυχή τις ἔσται πάντη παράδοξον ἀναλαμβάνουσα σῶμα, ἔχον μέν τι κοινὸν πρὸς τοὺς ἀνθρώπους ἵνα καὶ συνδιατρίψαι αὐτοῖς δυνηθῇ ἔχον δέ τι καὶ ἐξαίρετον ἵνα τῆς κακίας ἄγευστος διαμεῖναι δυνηθῇ;*—i. 33.

kind, a teacher of licentiousness and injustice, not of temperance and justice.[1] The stories about the birth of Plato are inventions, but they testify to an underlying assumption that one who was more than man must have been born of superior and divine seed.[2] There is nothing incredible in the supposition that God should have caused one who was sent as a divine Teacher to the human race to be born in a supernatural way. Not that there was anything in the appearance of the body of Jesus to compel belief in His divinity. There is no necessary visible relation between the form of the outward body and the nature of that from which it is born.[3] We acknowledge, therefore, that Scripture in some passages speaks of the body of Jesus as "unshapely," but nowhere as "ignoble"; nor is there any clear evidence that He was "little."[4]

III. The incarnation being a real and not a nominal assumption of a human nature, though a voluntary act, logically involved a circumscription of the divine attributes and the introduction of human methods and relations. By the application of this principle, Origen disposed of the objections which Celsus repeated so often about a God fleeing, suffering, thirsting, and dying.

Jesus was a "composite being," at once divine and

[1] i. 33. [2] i. 37. [3] vi. 73. [4] vi. 75.

human.[1] The Word became the man Jesus.[2] When He says, "I am the way," He speaks as the "first-born of every creature"; when He says, "Now ye seek to kill me, a man who has told you the truth," He speaks with reference to His humanity.[3] In the most literal sense He assumed a human nature. He took upon Him "the flesh which lusteth against the spirit."[4] The immortal God, the Word, assumed a mortal body and a human soul.[5] The result of this assumption was not a twofold personality; for the soul of Jesus and the Word are not two but one.[6] This union may be illustrated by the conception of the Church as the body of Christ. As the soul vivifies and moves the body which has neither motion nor life of itself, so the Word moves and energises the Church. "If that be so, is it hard to believe that the soul of Jesus, in virtue of its supreme and incomparable communion with the absolute Word, is not separated from the only-begotten, and is no longer different from Him?"[7] By this oneness, however, the body was not deified, nor was the Word absolutely circumscribed. The body of Jesus—the seen and sensible—was not God.[8] Christ did not refer to His body when He said,

[1] *σύνθετόν τι χρῆμά φαμεν αὐτὸν γεγονέναι*—i. 66. [2] ii. 42.
[3] ii. 25, 9. [4] iii. 28. [5] iv. 15; iii. 29. [6] vi. 47.
[7] *τί χαλεπὸν τῇ ἄκρᾳ καὶ ἀνυπερβλήτῳ κοινωνίᾳ πρὸς τὸν αὐτολόγον τὴν Ἰησοῦ ψυχὴν . . . μὴ κεχωρίσθαι τοῦ μονογενοῦς μηδ' ἕτερον ἔτι τυγχάνειν αὐτοῦ;*—vi. 48.
[8] ii. 9, 16.

"He that hath seen me hath seen the Father," for in that case those who cried, "Crucify Him," would have seen God the Father.[1] Though thus refusing to ascribe divinity to the body of Christ, and insisting that the incarnation was a real and not a seeming manifestation, Origen at times ascribes a unique character to that body. His form varied according to the varied capacity of the beholders. At one time he seemed to have no beauty, at another time to be so glorious that those who beheld Him fell on their faces.[2] It was not a change of substance but a change of relation, being conditioned by the relative progress of each beholder.[3] Hence He was and is most divine to those whose mental vision is keenest.[4] Jesus was verily one, but variously apprehended, and was not always seen alike by those who looked at Him. When about to be transfigured on the lofty mountain He did not take all the disciples, but only Peter, James, and John, as they alone were able to behold His glory. The saying of Judas, "Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is He," indicates that His form varied. In a word, His body was transformed when and to whom He willed.[5] Nay, there is a sense in which "His mortal body and the human soul in it, by union and intermixture with the Word, received the greatest virtues

[1] vii. 43. [2] vi. 77. [3] iv. 16, 18.

[4] τοῖς ἔχουσιν ὀφθαλμοὺς ψυχῆς ὀξυδερκεστάτους θεοπρεπέστατος—iii. 14.

[5] ii. 64.

and were changed into God." According to the Greek thinkers, matter, properly speaking, is without qualities, and sometimes lays aside the qualities it formerly possessed, and assumes superior and different qualities. What wonder, therefore, that the quality of the mortal body in Jesus, if God so willed it, should be changed into an ethereal and divine quality?[1] In like manner, while maintaining that the soul and body of Jesus became one with the Word of God, and refusing "to separate the Son of God from Jesus,"[2] Origen declares that Christ was not so restricted as to be nowhere outside of the soul and body of Jesus. Yet we shall do injustice to his Christology, if we represent either the variation in the outward form of Jesus, or His freedom from the limitation of place, as in his view inconsistent with the real humanity of Christ, or with that kenosis which was a necessary consequence of the incarnation. It was not a God who was crucified, but a man. This too the prophets had declared. Not even the simplest Christian, unversed in the subtleties of doctrine, would say, that the "truth died," or that the "resurrection died."[3]

In His flight, then, as a child from Herod, there was nothing ignoble, when the motive was not the fear of death but a desire to benefit others by abiding in life.[4] Born as a child, He had to be led away by those who were bringing Him up. It is in no way

[1] iii. 41, 42. [2] ii. 9. [3] vii. 16. [4] i. 61.

wonderful that, having once become incarnate, His life should be ordered in accordance with human methods and arrangements. It was not indeed impossible that it could be otherwise. But was it not better to adopt such means than by a divine interposition to interfere with the free-will of Herod? "Help that was manifestly miraculous would have hindered the cause of One who wished to teach, as a man to whom God bore witness, that there was a divinity in the man whom they saw with the eye of sense."[1] Christ lived and died in consistency with the human nature which He had assumed.[2] Though He ate the Passover with the disciples, though He was thirsty and drank at Jacob's well, though He ate after the resurrection—what of that? We teach that He had a body as having been born of woman.[3] The assumption of a body carried with it liability to such suffering as falls to men when in the body; He had no power in this respect to avoid suffering and pain at the hands of men.[4] His sufferings were real; for, if He only seemed to suffer, how could He be a pattern to those who were afterwards to endure hardships because of their piety?[5] In the case of such as wished to show a manly spirit, His suffering did not weaken their faith, but rather confirmed it.[6] And as He was

[1] ἔχειν τι θειότερον ἐν τῷ βλεπομένῳ ἀνθρώπῳ—i. 66.
[2] ii. 40; i. 69; viii. 42. [3] i. 70. [4] ii. 23.
[5] μὴ παθόντι μὲν τὰ ἀνθρώπινα μόνον δὲ δόξαντι πεπονθέναι—ii. 25.
[6] ii. 42.

in life, so in death. Being born He had to die; and having, as a man, determined to endure the hanging on the cross, as such He had to be buried.[1] No one can fail to see how thorough, in spite of occasional ambiguities, was Origen's grasp of the economy of the incarnation, or to acknowledge that the Scriptural view of the incarnation is consistent with itself.

IV. But such consistency might of itself only prove dramatic truthfulness. For the divinity ascribed to Jesus has many parallels in Greek mythology. How were His claims to be distinguished from others? How was the divinity of Christ and of His teaching to be established? Origen answers that he was induced by countless reasons to believe it.[2] Sometimes he assigns special prominence to prophecy, sometimes to miracles, sometimes to the teaching of Jesus; but it is to the MORAL FORCE exercised by Christianity in the world that he recurs most frequently, and the theoretical precedence which he accords to prophecy is always being set aside, and the ultimate test of the validity even of the other lines of defence is their ethical motive and issue. Christianity is to him pre-eminently the introduction of a new moral force into the world, and he regards it as self-evident that the results accomplished by Jesus could not have been effected without divine

[1] ii. 69. [2] ἄλλοις γὰρ μυρίοις προσήχθημεν—ii. 47. Cf. viii. 52.

power.[1] On the other hand there was nothing in the work of Minos or Perseus to command our assent to the stories which recount the divinity of their origin. They achieved no splendid work, useful to men, or influential for good on the generations which followed.[2] Origen casts a look over the world which polytheism had failed to elevate, which philosophy had been powerless to benefit save in very limited measure, and sees everywhere uprising in the midst of a corrupt society communities of men and women transfigured in life, motives, and aims. This moral transformation had been created by their acceptance of the Gospel of Christ, and invariably followed genuine belief. Whence sprang this force so uniformly beneficent in its workings? God is the one source of all that is useful to man. "A reverent spirit will maintain that even a physician of bodies comes to cities or nations in Providence; how much more a physician of souls whose aim is to turn men away from whatever is displeasing to God in deed, word, thought, or desire!" The note of philanthropy which characterises the Word is an evidence that it came from God.[3] If even a hundred people are cured of intemperance and injustice, is it reasonable to hold that one without divine power could have implanted

[1] καὶ αὐτῆς τῆς ἐναργείας· δείκνυται γὰρ οὐκ ἀθεεὶ τὰ τηλικαῦτα δεδυνημένος—v. 51.

[2] i. 67.

[3] i. 9.

in so many, doctrines that were fitted to deliver men from diseases of such virulence? The increasing meekness and reverence, even the passion for holiness displayed by many, demonstrate the power of Christ and His truth.[1] Every Church with its adherents living in moral union with the Creator is a witness of His divinity,[2] a proof that there was at least "no ordinary divinity in Him."[3] Evil passions are held in check, savage natures become gentle, by the agency of the Gospel. Those who profess to be interested in the common weal might recognise this new method of ridding men of evils, and testify that Christianity, if not true, was at least of advantage to the human race.[4] Celsus called Jesus a "plague." Can any one show with any appearance of truth that a "plague" converts men from a flood of wickedness into the life which is according to nature?[5] or that a system by which so many are made better could have originated in revolt or lust of gain?[6] By admitting the Word of God into their souls, the dissolute become temperate, and the superstitious pious.[7] It is a universal specific for the extirpation of evil.[8] For the teaching of Jesus is equally powerful over Greek and barbarian, and gains the mastery over every type of

[1] i. 26.

[2] *οὗ τῆς θειότητος μάρτυρες αἱ τοσαῦται τῶν μεταβαλόντων ἀπὸ τῆς χύσεως τῶν κακῶν ἐκκλησίαι*—i. 47.

[3] *οὐχ ἡ τυχοῦσα θειότης ἦν ἐν αὐτῷ*—iii. 31; i. 67.

[4] i. 64. Cf. iii. 29; vii. 26.

[5] ii. 29.

[6] iii. 14.

[7] iv. 5.

[8] v. 62.

human nature.[1] Believing that in demoniacal possession evil found its highest embodiment, Origen naturally gives special emphasis to the power of the name of Jesus in the expulsion of demons. They acknowledge His superiority by fearing His name.[2] Especially when it is spoken by a sound and truly believing heart, is the adjuration, "in the name of Jesus," all-powerful.[3] In the contempt for contumely and death with which He inspires His followers, the moral force of Christ is not less conspicuous.[4] "No philosopher could cast off his robe more readily, than does the Christian lay down his body for the sake of religion."[5] Jesus is the King of men, though not the founder of a kingdom according to the conception of Herod. His kingdom was worthy of God who gave it. It aimed at the wellbeing of those under its sway, by training them and subjecting them to laws truly of God.[6] We seek not merely to have an intellectual apprehension of this kingdom, but to possess it ourselves, to be ruled by God alone.[7] Christianity, thus, in the judgment of Origen, wielded an influence differing both in intensity and extent from anything hitherto known. It was at once universal and individual. The progress of Christianity was a continuous moral miracle, attended by results far

[1] πᾶσαν γὰρ φυσιν ἀνθρώπων ὁ μετὰ δυνάμεως λαληθεὶς λόγος κεκράτηκε—ii. 13.

[2] iii. 36. [3] i. 6; viii. 58. [4] ii. 44.

[5] vii. 39. [6] i. 61. [7] viii. 11.

more striking than any physical miracle. "For the eyes of the blind in soul are always being opened, and ears which were deaf to virtue listen with eagerness to the teaching concerning God and the blessed life with Him."[1] The power exercised by Jesus was not limited to the period of His incarnation;[2] it had not yet spent itself, but was always growing; and in this ever-present working of a spiritual energy which was created by Christ, and everywhere attended the promulgation of the Gospel, Origen sees a clear demonstration of His divinity.

V. Like all the early apologists, Origen assigns to PROPHECY a prominent place in the defence of Christ and Christianity.[3] It is that "demonstration of the spirit" of which St Paul speaks, and is a diviner method of argument than any furnished by Greek dialectic.[4] It gives the weightiest confirmation of the claims of Jesus.[5] The prophetic teaching concerning the Messiah is the basis of Christianity; its proof establishes the authority of the Word of God as well as the divine Sonship of Christ.[6]

[1] ii. 48.

[2] *τοῦ δὲ Ιησοῦ τὸ ἀνδραγάθημα οὐ κατὰ τοῦς αὐτοὺς τῆς ἐν σωματώσεως μόνους γέγονε χρόνους*—i. 43. Cf. viii. 35.

[3] Cf. Tert. Apol., c. 20.

[4] i. 2.

[5] *τὸ μέγιστον περὶ τῆς συστάσεως τοῦ Ἰησοῦ κεφάλαιον*—i. 49; ii. 28. Harnack is in error when he says that Origen assigns the argument from prophecy to the sphere of faith rather than that of gnosis. (Dogmengeschichte, vol. i. p. 573.)

[6] iii. 14; v. 33; iv. 1; viii. 9.

Celsus was well aware of this argument, as presented by the precursors of Origen, and brought objections against it both in his own name and in the person of the Jew. Against the Messianic prophecies he alleges, that the character of the Messiah predicted is not in harmony with that of Jesus; that the prophecies are so general that they may be applied to thousands as well as to Him; and that the unbelief of the Jews carries with it a presumption against His Messianic claims. Of Christ's own prophecies he avers, that they were invented by the disciples; and that, in any case, they prove nothing in favour of the authority of Jesus, but are rather adverse to it.

That the coming of a Messiah was predicted by Moses and his successors, even by his predecessors, is not denied by any Jew or heretic.[1] The hope was not limited to a few; the prophecies were so explicit and manifold that the whole nation hung on the expectation of His coming.[2] Whether Jesus were the Messiah or not, the investigation into the sense of the prophetic writings ought not to be compared to the "shadow of an ass," if it can be demonstrated "who the predicted one was, what he was to do, when he was to come."[3] Was this contemptuous comparison fitly applied to the prediction by the Jewish prophets of the birthplace of One who was to be the leader of those who lived well and were called the "portion of

[1] i. 49. [2] iii. 28. [3] iii. 4; iv. 52.

God"? or to the prophecies touching the conception of Emmanuel by a virgin, the miracles He would perform, the speedy promulgation of His word in all the world, His sufferings at the hands of the Jews, and His resurrection? Did the prophets say such things by chance? "Did they without the impulse of a strong assurance speak these words, and moreover deem them worthy of being committed to writing? Did the Jewish nation without reasonable ground approve of some as prophets, and reject others? Was it for nothing that they numbered along with the Books of Moses which were thought to be sacred the works of his successors who were thought to be prophets?"[1] According to Origen the national expectation of a Messiah is a striking phenomenon in religious history, and therefore a problem demanding serious study, irrespective of the claims of Jesus.

Was Jesus the Messiah? Or was the Messiah to be "a mighty prince, Lord of every nation and army"? The seeming antagonism disappears when it is observed that the prophets speak of two comings of the Christ. At the first coming He was to appear in lowly guise, fettered by human conditions, that being among men He might teach the way which leads to God, and take away from all the excuse that they were ignorant of a judgment to come. At the second coming He was to appear in the glory of divinity only, no human

[1] iii. 2.

element being interwoven with the divine. For confirmation of this solution Origen appeals to the 45th Psalm.[1]

That the Messianic prophecies can only be applied to Jesus, is clear to Origen on various grounds. Not one prophet, but many, foretold about the Christ in all kinds of ways; some by enigmas, some by allegories, some in express terms. "Let any one refute them if he can, or overturn the faith of an intelligent believer."[2] Micah foretold the place of His birth.[3] This prophecy cannot refer to any of the fanatics who claimed to come from above, unless it is demonstrated that He, who was born at Bethlehem, came to be a "ruler over the people." In support of the claims of Jesus and of the truth of the Gospel narrative, Origen says that, in Bethlehem was shown the cave in which He was born, and the stall in which He was swaddled. Even by those who are aliens from the Christian faith, it is admitted to be a notorious fact, that Jesus who is worshipped by the Christians was born there. Origen thinks that the birth at Bethlehem of the Messiah was taught by the priests and scribes before the coming of Christ, but that after His coming they ceased to teach

[1] i. 56. Cf. Tertull., Apol., c. 21; Adv. Jud., c. 14.

[2] i. 50. Cf. vii. 7.

[3] Micah v. 2. "And thou, Bethlehem, house of Ephrata, art not the least among the thousands of Judah; for out of thee shall He come forth unto me who is to be Ruler in Israel; and His goings forth have been from the beginning, from eternity"—i. 51.

it.[1] "If another clear prophecy be wanted, take what Jacob said to his sons."[2] How could Jacob fix on one tribe out of the twelve as the ruling tribe? How could he determine the end of the Jewish kingdom, and its coincidence with the calling of the Gentiles? Such prophecies are true of Jesus and of no other.[3] By Isaiah, the suffering as well as the cause of the suffering, the details of it, and the fruits of it, were all predicted. Origen refers to a discussion which he had held with some Jew who interpreted the "Servant of the Lord" as a type of the Jewish people when they were in a state of dispersion and suffering, since by that dispersion many Gentiles would become proselytes. He pointed out to the Jew the words, "For the transgression of my people was He led to death," as evidence that a person was clearly alluded to, and that there was a marked distinction between the people and the person who suffered.[4] Who is this but Jesus? Many details in the life and death of Jesus were predicted, and are applicable to Him, and to no other. His thirst was predicted.[5] His resurrection was predicted.[6] Upon all other claimants to Messianic dignity there is an unmistakable stamp of failure. In the Book of Acts[7] mention is made of Theudas who

[1] i. 51.

[2] Gen. xlix. 10. *οὐκ ἐκλείψειν ἄρχοντα ἐξ Ἰούδα καὶ ἡγούμενον ἐκ τῶν μηρῶν αὐτοῦ ἕως ἂν ἔλθῃ τὰ ἀποκείμενα αὐτῷ· καὶ αὐτος προσδοκία ἐθνῶν.*

[3] i. 53. [4] i. 55. Cf. Isa. liii. [5] ii. 28.

[6] ii. 62; iv. 30. [7] Acts v. 36, 37.

appeared before the birth of Jesus, of Judas the Galilean who appeared about the time when Jesus was born. With the death of the former, his deluded followers were scattered; with the punishment of the latter, his teaching was abolished, at most abiding among a very few of the lowest classes. Such too was the case with Dositheus the Samaritan, who claimed to be the Christ of whom Moses prophesied. Simon, a magician, wished to captivate some by his magic. He expected to scatter the fame of his name throughout the whole world; but to-day his followers are only about thirty, perhaps not so many; in Palestine they are extremely few.[1] From the harmony of the prophecies, in a multiplicity of details, with what is recorded of Jesus, from the absolute failure of all rival Messiahs, and the constant and ever-growing victory of Jesus, it is plain to Origen that the predictions are true of Jesus and of Him only.

But, if that were so, why did the Jews reject His claims? For the simple reason that prejudice makes men blind to the plainest truths, and prevents them from abandoning opinions with which their minds have become imbued. Men will even abandon a habit more readily than an opinion. See how people cling even to vain and shameful traditions. Can you easily persuade an Egyptian to cease regarding some irrational animal as divine?[2] Though the Jews expected

[1] i. 57. [2] i. 52.

a Messiah, there was nothing unnatural in their unbelief. Do those who inculcate self-restraint never do anything dissolute? Do those who have been ambassadors of righteousness never do anything unrighteous? Their inconsistency was quite in accordance with human nature.[1] The Jews should either believe that Jesus was the subject of prophecy or defend their unbelief by refuting our demonstrations.[2] Their unbelief, and, as a consequence, the calling of the Gentiles, were predicted. Because of the sins of the Hebrew people, it was prophesied that God would choose out "no particular nation, but chosen men from all quarters."[3] The unbelief of the Jews was in keeping with their character as revealed in their history. God wrought signs and wonders for them in Egypt, at the Red Sea, and in the desert; and yet, when the Decalogue was proclaimed, they gave way to unbelief, else they would not have fashioned the golden calf.[4] "If in your judgment the miracles of Moses were greater than the miracles of Christ, is it not plain, on the face of it, that it was perfectly consistent for those who disbelieved the greater to despise the less? If you hold them to be equal, is it in any way strange that a people who disbelieved the beginning of the old dispensation should disbelieve the beginning of the new? By not believing in Jesus you testify that you are the

[1] *ἀνθρώπινον ἦν*—ii. 8.
[2] ii. 38.
[3] *οὐχὶ ἔθνος ἀλλὰ λογάδας πανταχόθεν*—ii. 78.
[4] ii. 74.

sons of those who disbelieved the divine manifestations in the desert."[1] The unbelief of the Jews in Jesus is then to be explained, partly on the general ground of the strength of prejudice, partly by the wonted contradiction exhibited in human nature between the ideal and the real, partly by the national characteristics plainly presented in their history which contained so many parallels to their rejection of Jesus.

The disciples did not invent the prophecies which are recorded to have been spoken by Jesus concerning His suffering and death. This is disproved generally by the truthful character of the writers, as well as by certain features in the prophecies themselves. If they had been writers of fiction, they would have omitted His prophecy of the denial of Peter and of the offence of all the disciples. Would not our natural expectation have been that men, who wished to teach those who fell in with the Gospels to despise death for the sake of Christianity, would have been silent about the defection of the disciples? That they were not silent shows their faith in the victorious power of the Gospel.[2] By not recording them at all the writers could easily have escaped the charge of Celsus, of not giving their fictions a credible character. The disciples cannot be at once accused of being themselves deceived concerning the divinity of Jesus, and of inventing what they

[1] ii. 75. [2] ii. 15.

knew to be fictions. The two theories contradict each other. "Either they did not invent but told their own opinions in no spirit of falsehood; or they lied, and recorded what were not their own opinions, and were not deceived into thinking that He was God." [1] Disproof of the theory of invention is found, moreover, in the prophecies spoken by Jesus touching the destiny of His followers in later generations. Take this prophecy of persecution. "And ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony to them and the Gentiles." [2] "For what sort of dogma current among men were others punished? [3] Is there any room on this ground to allege that Jesus, foreseeing that His dogmas would be attacked on the ground of impiety and falsehood, thought to gain glory by predicting it?" Persecution for religious opinions was a novelty. The Christians, and they only, are brought before kings and governors, simply for holding by the teaching of Jesus. No interference is made with the Epicureans who deny Providence, or the Peripatetics who declare that prayers and sacrifices are of no avail. "The Samaritans, you say, are punished for their religious service." No: in the case of the Sicarii, there is no question of religious opinions; the only question is, whether, contrary

[1] ii. 26. Cf. ii. 24, 34.

[2] Matt. x. 18.

[3] διὰ ποῖον γὰρ δόγμα τῶν ἐν ἀνθρώποις γεγενημένων κολάζονται καὶ ἄλλοι—ii. 13.

to the law, they have undergone circumcision. Only on the Christians is pressure brought to induce them to forswear Christianity; they can live in security if they sacrifice according to the common customs.[1] Origen here rises above the mechanical conception of prophecy which was too dominant in his thought, and sets forth a deep truth and argument in connection with the claims of Jesus. This prophecy, spoken with a consciousness of authority, reveals a divine insight into the hearts of men, and a clear understanding of the revolution which His teaching would create. Hitherto individuals might have been persecuted, but not the representative of a system as such. Anticipating the promulgation of His Gospel throughout the Roman Empire, He was under no illusion as to the reception of the message, or as to the certainty of collision with the State. Enjoining the disciples to preach in the whole world, He dreamed of no immediate and peaceful victory, but predicted certain conflict. In this prophetic insight Origen sees a confirmation of the details of the prophecies. A like supernatural foresight is conspicuous in the prediction of the destruction of Jerusalem. "Go back in thought to the time when these prophecies were spoken and yet unfulfilled. Say—'I will not believe: he is talking idly, and his words will not be fulfilled.' Or say —'I will not give my adherence to these words unless

[1] ii. 13.

they be fulfilled; but if they are, then I will believe that He spoke these words with the consciousness of one who had received great power from God to sow the Word among mankind, and in the conviction that it would prevail."[1] These prophecies are every day finding continuous fulfilment: in this way we are lost in admiration of Him, and our faith is daily confirmed.[2]

Celsus had argued that the supposed predictions of Jesus were refuted by the action of the disciples and of Jesus Himself. Had the disciples been forewarned, they would have abandoned their designs of treachery and denial. If Jesus foreknew, and did not frustrate their aims, He was guilty of unparalleled imprudence. Or, if He were a God who foreknew, their action was inevitable.

The charge of imprudence is characterised by Origen as exceedingly foolish, and is refuted by analogy. The unspoken thought of Celsus was that no one would die if he could avoid it. Apart from the death of Christ for men being of service to the whole world, it was a necessary part of His mission.[3] "As He presented to men the pattern of the way in which they ought to live, it was necessary that He should also be a pattern of the way in which men ought to die for the sake of piety."[4] The shrinking

[1] ii. 13; i. 62.

[2] ii. 42.

[3] *χωρὶς τοῦ χρήσιμόν τι τῷ παντὶ γεγονέναι τὸ ὑπὲρ ἀνθρώπων αὐτὸν ἀποθανεῖν*—ii. 16.

[4] Idem.

from death disappears before the inspiration of a lofty motive. Socrates could have avoided the hemlock, if he had so desired; but he preferred to die like a philosopher rather than to live unlike a philosopher.[1] The same holds true of Leonidas. Paul illustrates the same principle. Many of us could obtain life by abjuring Christianity, but voluntarily choose death.[2]

Dealing with the question, started by Celsus, of the relation between divine foreknowledge and human freedom, Origen says that the foretelling of an event does not infallibly necessitate its occurrence. "'The person who foretells is not the cause of that which is about to happen; but the event, which was about to happen, and would have happened though it had not been foretold, furnished to him who foreknew it the cause of foretelling it. He who foreknows does not take away the possibility of its happening or not happening, as if he said, 'This will in any case be, and it is impossible that it can be otherwise.'"[3] It does not follow, then, that because Jesus foretold the treachery of the disciples He was the cause of their impiety and unholy action. For He saw the evil disposition of Judas; and, knowing what was in man, and seeing what he would do for love of money and from the want of a steadfast sense of duty towards his teacher, He predicted that he would be a

[1] *φιλοσόφως ἀποθανεῖν ἢ ἀφιλοσόφως ζῆν*—ii. 17. [2] Idem.
[3] *τόδε πάντως ἔσται καὶ ἀδύνατον ἑτέρως γενέσθαι*—ii. 20.

traitor.[1] In like manner was it with the denial of Peter. Jesus recognised the weakness that would issue in his denial and foretold it; but the weakness was not immediately taken away by the foreknowledge.[2] Origen therefore maintains against Celsus that these things took place as being possible; and because they took place, the fact of their prediction is shown to be true; for it is by the issues that we judge of the truth of things foreseen and future.[3]

VI. The possibility of MIRACLES was not explicitly denied by Celsus. From his speculative standpoint, a miracle (in the sense of an interference by God in the realm of law) was impossible; but it suited his polemic better to attack the miracles of Jesus from the position of a seeming believer in the popular mythology. He therefore puts those of Jesus on a level with the tricks of jugglers, and the marvellous feats recorded of various legendary heroes. The discussion of Origen, though it contains some fruitful thoughts, is conditioned by the nature of the attack.

[1] ii. 20.

[2] ii. 18.

[3] ii. 19. Origen discusses the same problem with great fulness in various places, especially in his Comm. in Genes. iii. 3-6 (Lomm., vol. viii. p. 21), and his solution is substantially the same. *Οὐ τὴν πρόγνωσιν αἰτίαν τῶν γινομένων . . . ἀλλα παραδοξότερον μὲν ἀληθὲς δὲ ἐροῦμεν, τὸ ἐσόμενον αἴτιον τοῦ τοιάνδε εἶναι τὴν περὶ αὐτοῦ πρόγνωσιν.* Cf. Comm. in Roman. i. 3 (Lomm. vi. 18). "As men judge by the past of the merit of each man, God judges by the future. It is impiety not to believe that what we see in the past, God sees in the future."

Incidentally he lays down a principle which goes to the root of the matter.

Celsus had said that God does not will anything "contrary to nature."[1] If that means anything wicked or irrational, it is true. "But if things done according to the will of God are at once acknowledged to be not 'contrary to nature,' it follows that things done by God, though they may be or seem incredible, are not 'contrary to nature.' And, if we use words with rigorous accuracy, we will say that, with reference to nature commonly understood, there are some things 'above nature'[2] which God could at any time do."[3] Origen illustrates this distinction by a spiritual miracle, the raising of a man above the nature of a man, and making him a partaker of a diviner nature; but the same principle can be applied to physical miracles.

A miracle, being "above nature," though not "contrary to nature," is an evidence of supernatural power in the man by whom it is wrought. Miracle is the "demonstration of power," just as prophecy is the "demonstration of spirit."[4] By means of it, God wished to commend the teacher and his doctrine as a divine, saving doctrine to those who beheld it.[5] The same was true of the revelation given to Moses.

[1] *παρὰ φύσιν.* [2] *ὑπὲρ τὴν φύσιν.* [3] v. 23. [4] i. 8.
[5] *τοῖς θεωρήσασι συνίστη τὸν διδάσκαλον ὁ τοῦτ' ἐνεργήσας γενέσθαι θεός*—iii. 31.

Jesus came to the Jews, because they were accustomed to miraculous events.[1] If, as the Jews acknowledged, their own nation was established by miracle, is this not more manifest in the case of Jesus, who wrought a greater work than Moses?[2] The miracles done by Jesus among the Jews showed Him to be the "power of God."[3] They prove that the descent of the Spirit was a reality.[4] Christianity was founded on miracles, and by miracles it was extended. "By them, rather than by persuasive words, men were induced to abandon ancestral customs, and adopt others foreign to their own."[5] Without the possession of such powers, men unlettered and ignorant would not have had the courage to proclaim the Gospel to men who had been nurtured in traditions so hostile;[6] without this they could not have captivated their hearers.[7] Traces of such powers are still preserved among the Christians. They drive out demons, and accomplish many cures. "Under the influence of some spirit the reason of men has been turned instantaneously against their will." From hating the truth, they become ready to die for it.[8] Elsewhere Origen returns to his prevalent mode of thought, and attributes more weight to the "word and character" of Christ (at

[1] ii. 57. [2] ii. 51, 52. [3] ii. 9. [4] i. 46.

[5] ὑπὸ τῶν τεραστίων ἤπερ τῶν προτρεπτικῶν λόγων προσαγομένους τῷ καταλιπεῖν μὲν τὰ πάτρια, αἱρεῖσθαι δὲ τὰ τῶν πατρίων ἀλλότρια—viii. 47.

[6] Idem. [7] i. 38. [8] i. 46. Cf. iii. 24.

least in the case of others than the first eyewitnesses), than to the miracles.[1] If it be deemed necessary to reconcile the contradictions almost inevitable in a controversial treatise with so unsystematic a plan, the thought of Origen may be thus interpreted. In his judgment the miraculous power in Jesus and the apostles created a presumption in favour of His teaching. This was confirmed by further knowledge of Him as "the pattern of a perfect life";[2] and thus the moral argument took precedence of the miraculous, which lost its former prominence in the Christian consciousness, and was superseded though not altogether supplanted.

The miracles of Jesus were not invented by the writers of the Gospels. Had the evangelists invented them, they would have been more lavish in regard both of number and magnitude. They would have recounted how he had raised many from the dead, and not three only. They would have represented those who were raised as having been a longer time in their graves. The paucity and freedom from extravagance are a testimony to their reality. Those alone were raised whom the Logos knew to be fitted for the resurrection.[3]

[1] *οἱ λοιποὶ πλέον διδαχθέντες ἀπὸ τοῦ λόγου καὶ ἤθους ἢ καὶ τῶν παραδόξων ὡς χρὴ βιοῦν*—i. 68.

[2] *παράδειγμα ἀρίστου βίου*—idem.

[3] *μόνοι ἀνέστησαν, οὓς ἔγνω ὁ λόγος ἐπιτηδείους πρὸς τὴν ἀνάστασιν*—ii. 48.

They were not the work of sorcery. There was no motive. What motive could a magician have in teaching a system which persuaded every man to act as if God were judging him for his every action? Would magicians expose themselves to great perils to introduce teaching which would abolish magic?[1] Celsus had quoted Jesus as warning His disciples against those who might do signs and wonders, and so argued that Jesus Himself had destroyed the validity of any claim to divinity which might be based on the miraculous. If Jesus had simply told the disciples to be on their guard against those who announced marvels, the suspicions suggested by Celsus might not have been altogether groundless. But He only warns them against those who profess to be the Christ, which sorcerers do not profess to be. He said that men of evil life would work miracles, and cast out devils in His name. In such a case there is no suspicion of sorcery, but rather a confirmation of the divinity of Christ and that of His disciples.[2] Moreover, the works of the Antichrist were declared to be "lying signs and wonders"; but the miracles of Christ and His apostles have, as their fruit, not deceit, but the salvation of souls. Could a daily increase in holiness be the offspring of deceit?[3]

Neither in nature, nor in aim, are the miracles of Jesus to be compared with those of sorcerers, or such

[1] i. 38. [2] ii. 49. [3] ii. 50, 44.

as are ascribed to the heroes of Greek mythology. "Celsus makes things homogeneous which are heterogeneous. A wolf has a certain likeness in voice and in bodily form to a dog, but it is not of the same kind; so there is no likeness between that which is accomplished by the power of God, and that which takes place from sorcery. If you admit that miracles seem to be wrought by evil spirits and sorcerers, you must admit the former. For it may be laid down as a universal postulate, that when anything worse assumes the form of that which is better, there infallibly must be the better which is opposed to it; the accomplishment of marvels by sorcery implies the existence of miracles wrought by divine energy. You must take away both or acknowledge both. Otherwise you are like men, who admit the existence of sophisms, but deny the existence of truth. If in such miracles there is an admitted evidence of divine power, why not test those who announce marvels by their life and character, and by marking whether the issue is the injury of men or the reformation of morals?"[1] No miracles save those of Jesus stand this ultimate test. By their moral aim they are differentiated from all others. The work of jugglers ends when the demonstration ends: the miracle is an end in itself: the performers

[1] διὰ τί οὐχὶ καὶ βεβασανισμένως τοὺς ἐπαγγελομένους τὰς δυνάμεις ἐξετάσομεν ἀπὸ τοῦ βίου καὶ τοῦ ἤθους καὶ τῶν ἐπακολουθούντων ταῖς δυνάμεσιν ἤτοι εἰς βλάβην τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἢ εἰς ἠθῶν ἐπανόρθωσιν: ii. 51.

do not incite the spectators to moral reform, nor lead them to the fear of God: how could they do so, when they are themselves notorious sinners? But Jesus by His miracles induced the spectators to reform their lives and do all things with reference to the will of God. Is it reasonable therefore to compare Him with the class of sorcerers, and not rather believe that "He was God manifested in a human body for the welfare of our race"?[1]

The same argument disposes of the parallel drawn by Celsus between Jesus and Asclepius, Abaris and others. The miracles of Greeks were wrought by demons.[2] Not that they were really wrought; for while some evil demons had power to procure the recording of these marvels, they had not power to procure their actual accomplishment.[3] With what end were these marvels related?[4] "If you put yourself in the position of an arbiter, and compare what is recorded of both, and look to the relative improvement in morals and in piety, you will acknowledge that a divine power was at work in Jesus and not in others."[5] In the life of these men there is no indication of the divinity ascribed to them in the story: they are recorded to have done innumerable actions contrary to right reason. It is otherwise with Him.[6] In brief, the marvels of Greek mythology were only marvels,

[1] i. 68. [2] viii. 47. [3] iii. 32.
[4] iii. 28. Cf. iii. 25, 31. [5] iii. 27. [6] iii. 42, 33.

and had no higher end in view; the human race was in no way benefited by them.[1] Apart from the marvels, the men had no claim to divinity, and their life was inconsistent with any divine character; but in Jesus the miracles were only a means to an end; that end in turn testifies to their reality. His miracles do not stand alone, but are only a link in a chain; they are in harmony with His teaching and life which were not less supernatural, and they cannot be judged in themselves, apart from their consequences, nor even by their consequences alone; they must be treated as parts of what claims to be a consistent whole.

VII. With unerring insight Celsus perceived that of all the miracles recorded in the Gospels, the resurrection was the final test of the claim of Jesus to be divine. The objections are put mainly into the mouth of his Jew, but they are not distinctively Jewish. Rather is the attack such as we are apt to consider to be essentially modern in its method; it represents both the coarser and the more scientific weapons of negative criticism. Following his general principle, he compares the narrative of the resurrection with similar myths in Greek story. The origin of the belief may be accounted for in various ways. It was based on the statement of a half-frenzied woman, or of some one who, like her, mistook a phantasm for

[1] iii. 29, 31, 34.

a reality. Or it was a deliberate lie. Had He disappeared from the cross, there might have been some ground for belief; or, on the contrary, if He appeared at all, He should not have concealed Himself, but should have appeared before His judges and men generally.

Origen has little difficulty in showing that there was a dramatic impropriety in some of the objections coming from a Jew. The Old Testament contained records of persons being raised from the dead; but the unlikeness evinced the superiority of Jesus. "Others were raised by prophets like Elijah; He was raised by no prophet, but by His Father in the heavens." Hence from His resurrection greater consequences flowed.[1]

Upon the legends of resurrections in Greek history and philosophy Origen speaks with uncertain—not to say, contradictory—voice. Before he has noticed, or after having read has forgotten, this part of the attack of Celsus, he sees in the writings of Plato and others parallels to the Gospel narrative. He gives it as an argument to unbelievers (who believed in Greek traditions), and though, as such, successful in its immediate object, it tends to impair the force of the arguments which he brings forward immediately afterwards. He recals to the Greeks the beautiful story told by Plato at the close of 'The Republic,' about Er

[1] ii. 58.

the son of Armenius rising from the funeral-pyre after twelve days, and announcing what he had learned of the condition of souls in Hades. He refers to others who are said to have risen not only on the same day but on the day after, and asks, "What marvel then that He who in life had done many miracles beyond the power of man, should have something superior about His death, so that the soul might voluntarily leave the body and return again when He so willed."[1] In admitting this analogy, he was carried away by the desire of quoting Plato against those to whom the teaching of Plato was authoritative, and so forged a weapon which could be turned against himself.

In replying afterwards to the statement of Celsus, that many heroes gave out that after death they had come from Hades, he regains his wonted insight and power. There is no ground of comparison between such heroes and Jesus; for there is no evidence of their having died. They might have withdrawn themselves at will from the eyes of men and decided to return again to those whom they had left; but Jesus was crucified in the presence of all the Jews and His body openly taken down. Had He died by an obscure death and then afterwards truly risen from the dead, there might have been some suspicion of an apparent parallel. "And it may be that one ground for the

[1] ii. 16.

public crucifixion was this very fact, that no one might have it in his power to say that He had voluntarily withdrawn from the sight of men, and seemed to die but did not really die, and then reappeared, and made a marvellous portent of His resurrection from the dead."[1] As His suffering was not seeming but real, so was His resurrection. For He who was truly dead, if He rose truly rose; but, if He only seemed to die, He did not really rise.[2]

If, then, the parallel suggested by Celsus breaks down, and the story of the resurrection cannot be explained by the natural tendency of men to represent a moral force as persistent after death, how is it to be accounted for, if not acknowledged to be truth?

Celsus, like Renan, declared that the Church of Christ was founded on an illusion of Mary Magdalene. The answer of Origen is, that the same Gospels, which tell of His appearance to Mary, tell of His appearance to many others, and not to her only: both rest on the same authority.[3] The allegation, that a shadowy phantom was transformed by a disordered fancy into a living person, is acknowledged by him to have a certain plausibility and cleverness. Such appearances

[1] αὐτον ἐπισήμως ἐπὶ τοῦ σταυροῦ ἀποτεθνηκέναι, ἵνα μηδεὶς ἔχῃ λέγειν ὅτι ἑκὼν ὑπεξέστη τῆς ὄψεως τῶν ἀνθρώπων καὶ ἔδοξεν ἀποτεθνηκέναι, οὐκ ἀποτέθνηκε δὲ ἀλλ' ἐπιφανεὶς ἐτερατεύσατο τὴν ἐκ νεκρῶν ἀνάστασιν —ii. 56.

[2] ii. 16; iii. 43.

[3] ii. 59, 70.

help to substantiate, as Plato taught,[1] the existence of the soul apart from the body. "In a dream by night such a confusion is intelligible, but not in a waking vision, unless on the supposition that the beholders are altogether out of their senses, or delirious, or melancholy-mad."[2] Of this there is no indication in the recorded history. The action of Thomas refutes the theory. He thought that the miracle was impossible. He assented to the statement of Mary that she had seen Jesus, as he did not consider it impossible that the soul of the dead could be seen; but he did not at all think that Jesus had risen with a body in all respects alike to that which He had before.[3] He believed that the "body of a soul" might appear to the eyes of sense, in all respects like unto the former form:

μέγεθός τε καὶ ὄμματα κάλ' ἐοικυίης
καὶ φωνήν.[4]

Wherefore Thomas did not merely say, "Unless I see I shall not believe," but added, "Unless I put my hand into the print of the nails and feel His side I shall not believe."[5] Moreover, how could the passing vision of a phantom implant in the souls of men a conviction of their responsibility to God as their judge?[6]

[1] Phædo, 69.

[2] *ὅπερ ὄναρ μὲν πιστεύειν γίγνεσθαι, οὐκ ἄλογον· ὕπαρ δὲ ἐπὶ τῶν μὴ πάντη ἐκφρόνων καὶ φρενετιζόντων ἢ μελαγχολώντων, οὐ πιθανόν*—ii. 60.

[3] *ἐν σώματι αὐτὸν ἀντιτύπῳ ἐγηγέρθαι*—ii. 61.

[4] Iliad, xxiii. 66.

[5] John xx. 25. *καὶ ψηλαφήσω αὐτοῦ τὴν πλευράν*—ii. 61.

[6] vii. 35.

While maintaining the reality of the resurrection body of Christ, Origen holds that it differed from that which was His before the crucifixion, that it was something intermediate between the grossness of the former body and an unclothed bodiless soul.[1]

If then, from the general tenor of the Gospel narrative, and especially from the sceptical attitude of Thomas, it is clear that the disciples were not the victims of a fond illusion, they must have knowingly and in unison invented the story. Their own action proves the falsity of such an hypothesis. They would not have taught the truth with such firmness, nor induced others to despise death, themselves leading the way.[2] They laughed at all the troubles in life, because of their persuasion of the truth of the resurrection.[3] "If the disciples did not see Jesus after He rose from the dead, and were not persuaded that He was divine, what induced them to suffer as their teacher did, and face danger, and leave their fatherland, in order to fulfil the will of God and teach the doctrines which He had committed to them? Would they otherwise have taught new truths in the face of impending destruction, with the certainty of losing the friendship of every man that clung to the old traditions?"[4]

[1] *ὡσπερεὶ ἐν μεθορίῳ τινὶ τῆς παχύτητος τῆς πρὸ τοῦ πάθους σώματος καὶ τοῦ γυμνὴν τοιούτου σώματος φαίνεσθαι ψυχήν*—ii. 62.

[2] ii. 56. [3] ii. 77; iii. 23. [4] i. 31.

"Why then did He not disappear from the cross, or appear openly before all?" A charge of this kind may fitly be compared to arguments brought against Providence by men who say that the world would have been better if it had been framed and ordered according to their conceptions. When they are limited to what is possible, they describe a world not better but worse than the present; when the world of their fancy is not worse, they are convicted of desiring things impossible in nature.[1] In either case they incur ridicule. And had Jesus disappeared, as Celsus suggested, no doubt he would have asked, why did He disappear after the crucifixion, and not rather before He suffered? He could not so disappear, because His death necessarily involved His burial, and also because every detail of the resurrection had a symbolic import. The mere letter does not exhaust the meaning. In somewhat fantastic fashion, but with a sound instinct, Origen shows that the resurrection is not to be regarded as an isolated or external factor in Christianity, but a part of the truth itself.[2]

It was not imperative on Jesus, nor was it possible for Him, to appear before all. It was not imperative, and it was from kindness to His enemies that He refrained. He wished to spare them and not smite them with blindness like the men in Sodom. He showed His divine power to those who were able to

[1] ii. 68. [2] ii. 69.

see Him, and according to their measure of vision.[1] There was no other obstacle. Before He died, all were able to see Him; but it was otherwise when "He had cast off principalities and powers."[2] Not even the apostles were able to endure His divinity continuously. Jesus is no more to be blamed for not appearing to all after the resurrection, than for not taking all to be witnesses of His transfiguration.[3] The manifestation of God to Abraham or any of the saints finds its counterpart in the manifestation of Christ to men after His suffering: it was not granted to all, nor uninterrupted in the case of any: the determining factor in every instance was fitness to behold.[4]

Celsus had marked the discrepancies in the Gospel narratives, but he cannot have emphasised them; for he alludes to them only at a later stage in his work, by way of parenthesis. "Some say, one angel appeared, some say, two." Matthew and Mark,[5] says Origen, speak of one angel; Luke and John speak of two.[6] Those who mention the one, speak of the one who rolled away the stone from the tomb; those who mention the two, speak of those who appeared in shining raiment to the women who were at the sepulchre, or who were seen within in white raiment.[7] The reality of the vision of angels is sufficiently attested by the char-

[1] ii. 67. [2] ii. 64. [3] ii. 65.
[4] ii. 66. [5] Matt. xxviii. 2; Mark xvi. 5.
[6] Luke xxiv. 4; John xx. 12. [7] v. 56.

acter of the men who recorded it,—who would rather have died than utter one word of falsehood about God. Neither in the announcement by angels of the resurrection, nor in their assistance to the disciples, was anything unreasonable.[1] "On the face of it, does it not seem more dignified that an inferior should roll away the stone, than that He who had risen for the welfare of men should do so Himself? The men who plotted against Him and sought to prove to all that He was dead, and brought to nothingness, did not at all wish His tomb to be opened; but the Angel of God who had come to this world for the salvation of men, with the co-operation of another angel, was stronger than His plotters and rolled away the heavy stone." In this way, those who thought that the Word had died, were persuaded that He was no longer with the dead but living, and that He had gone before those who desire to follow Him, that He might reveal to them the higher aspects of truth which they were unable to receive at the time of their entrance into the school of Christ.[2] To the soul of Origen, with its passionate love of truth, the resurrection was thus the pledge and earnest of that eternal life whose essence is ever-growing knowledge of God and His truth.

[1] v. 57.

[2] ἵνα ἐπιδείξηται τὰ ἑξῆς οἷς ἐπεδείξατο πρότερον τοῖς μὴ χωροῦσι πω αὐτῶν μείζονα κατὰ τὸν πρότερον τῆς εἰσαγωγῆς αὐτῶν χρόνον—v. 58.

VIII. Celsus attacked Jesus as a TEACHER, both in His relation to the disciples, and in respect of the truths which He taught. As a teacher He failed utterly; He won but a few adherents, who proved faithless; His teaching was not original.

Origen maintains, on the contrary, that the ministry of Jesus by its unparalleled success stirred up the envy of the chief priests, elders, and scribes. Multitudes followed Him into desert places; some captivated by the beauty of the words of Him who always adapted His teaching to the hearers, some who did not accept His doctrine being astonished by His miracles.[1] Nay, so powerful was the magical charm of His words that He was followed into the desert not by thousands of men merely, but by women who in their eagerness to follow their teacher "were unmindful of the weakness of their sex, or a regard for conventional propriety."[2] And children too, who are "most apathetic" in spiritual things, followed; whether it was that they came along with their parents, or that they were attracted by the divine power of Jesus, and wished their souls to be imbued with that power.[3] Only the desert could contain the crowds of those who believed in God through Him.[4] The disciples, it is true, before that they had been fully trained into manly endurance, gave way to

[1] ii. 39, 43.

[2] *τοσαύτη γάρ τις ἴυγξ ἦν ἐν τοῖς Ἰησοῦ λόγοις . . . ἀλλὰ καὶ γυναῖκας οὐχ ὑπομεμνημένας τὴν γυναικείαν ἀσθένειαν καὶ τὸ δοκοῦν*—iii. 10.

[3] Idem.

[4] ii. 46.

cowardice, for they were but men; but they never gave up their faith that He was the Christ.[1] Celsus believes the record of their sin, when as yet they were imperfect; why does he pass over in silence their subsequent rectitude, their boldness in presence of the Jews, their countless sufferings and martyrdom?[2] Even Judas was not wholly an apostate. "He gave way to conflicting views about his teacher, and was not opposed to Him with his whole heart, nor with his whole heart did he preserve the reverence for Him which a scholar ought to preserve." The kiss of betrayal shows that he retained a measure of reverence; otherwise he would have boldly betrayed Him without any pretence of affection. It proves that his soul was not wholly mastered by avarice, but that some remnant of good mingled with the evil. For if Judas, the money-loving and dishonest, gave back the thirty pieces of silver, manifestly the instruction of Jesus had not been utterly rejected by the traitor, when it was able to beget a certain penitence. So intensely passionate was his sorrow that he could no longer endure life; his self-condemnation was a tribute to the teaching of Jesus, since it could act so powerfully in one who was a sinner, traitor, and thief.[3]

It is ridiculous to suppose that Jesus borrowed any part of His teaching from Plato. He was born and

[1] ii. 39. [2] ii. 45. [3] ii. 11.

brought up among the Jews. He was regarded as the son of Joseph the carpenter, and, as the truth-loving Scriptures testify, had not learned the letters of the Hebrews, much less the letters of the Greeks.[1] "What man of moderate capacity, whether a believer or not, would not laugh at Celsus for suggesting that one so trained had read Plato, and changed and corrupted some of his sayings?"[2] The teaching of Jesus contains truth pure and unmixed with error.[3] He carries our minds far above everything sensible and corruptible to the Supreme God, bidding us combine prayer with holy living.[4] That men should strive after the life which was akin to the life of God, was a prominent note in His teaching.[5] To live according to the precepts of Jesus, is the pathway to friendship with God, and to fellowship with Him.[6]

IX. Even the CHARACTER of Jesus was not, according to Celsus, free from reproach. He was a braggart and impious. His use of threatenings was a confession of impotence.

As Celsus brought forward no evidence in support of these charges, Origen contents himself for the most part with a simple denial, and calls for proof. Jesus

[1] John vii. 15. Cf. Matt. xiii. 54; Mark vi. 2.
[2] vi. 16. [3] v. 51. [4] iii. 34. [5] ii. 45.
[6] *ἀνάγοντα ἐπὶ τὴν πρὸς τὸν θεὸν φιλίαν καὶ τὴν πρὸς ἐκεῖνον κοινωνίαν, πάντα τὸν κατὰ τὰς Ἰησοῦ ὑποθήκας ζῶντα*—iii. 28.

was sinless, and perfectly pure. The sinlessness was not attained without severe conflict; He was a "great wrestler."[1] Not even those who plotted against Him could find in the testimony of their own false witnesses any plausible ground for accusing Him of any form of intemperance.[2] What Celsus called His vagabondism was only a proof of His philanthropy; He overlooked no city, not even any village of Judæa, that He might everywhere proclaim the kingdom of God.[3] So far from being a braggart, Jesus avoided self-reference, and often enforced silence on the disciples.[4] Can He who said, "I am meek and lowly of heart," who washed the feet of the disciples, who was "among them as one that serveth," be accused of arrogance? Was there any impiety in raising the minds of men above material rites and ordinances to the true and spiritual law of God?[5] The charge that Jesus used threats comes strangely from the lips of a Jew whose God often used stronger menaces; but, waiving that objection, Origen gives a better solution. Christ spoke these words in His capacity of a spiritual physician, and they are to be interpreted as a concession to human weakness. For, like God, in whose nature He shares, Christ in His intercourse with men, thinks not of what is due to His own nature, but adapts Himself to the individual character.[6]

[1] *μέγαν ἀγωνιστὴν*—i. 69. Cf. ii. 41, 42.
[2] iii. 23. [3] ii. 38. [4] i. 48. [5] ii. 7.
[6] *ἑκάστῳ γε κατὰ τὸ ὑποκείμενον ἦθος διαλέγεσθαι*—ii. 76.

X. In no part of his work is Celsus's want of insight so conspicuous as in his attack on the SUFFERING and DEATH of Jesus. It is a striking commentary on the words of St Paul that "Christ crucified was unto the Greeks foolishness."[1] He applies to the suffering Christ the test of an impassive stoicism, and naturally finds Him wanting. He follows Christ into Gethsemane to scoff at His apparent weakness; he stands with the mockers around the cross to jeer at His impotence and desertion; he declares that, if He had been the Son of God, His death would have been avenged on the spot, or at least afterwards.

Jesus suffered willingly, and cannot therefore be accused of weakness because of His suffering.[2] He allowed Himself to be taken prisoner at the fitting time, conscious that He was "the Lamb of God who was to take away the sin of the world,"[3] and that His death would be of advantage to the whole of mankind,[4] and of saving power to the whole world.[5] He endured for men a death deemed dishonourable.[6] He is "the seed of corn which died and has borne much fruit;" and the Father is always seeing in prospect the fruit that has sprung, is springing, and will spring from the death of this seed of corn.[7] His death was a pattern of death for piety, but not that alone. "It first broke, and continues to break, the power of that evil one, the

[1] 1 Cor. i. 23. [2] ii. 59, 32. [3] ii. 10. [4] ii. 23.
[5] iii. 17. [6] i. 11. [7] viii. 43. Cf. John xii. 24.

devil, to whom the whole earth had been allotted."[1] In this saving power of a voluntary death there was nothing monstrous. It finds its counterpart in the case of any who have died for their country in order to avert famine or pestilence. The disciples recognised this analogy. "That the voluntary dying of one just man for the common weal has power to drive off the evil spirits which create pestilence and kindred evils, is probably a law inherent in the nature of things, in accordance with certain principles of a mysterious order, hard for the multitude to grasp."[2] Illustrations may be found in Greek histories. If you believe these, why not believe what is said about Christ? Why not believe that He, who was thought to be man, died for the removal of the great Demon—even the ruler of demons—who kept in subjection all the souls of men that come upon the earth?[3] It would seem, then, according to Origen, that the difference between the death of Christ, and the death of any martyr for country or for truth, is only a question of degree; that of Jesus is only the more efficacious because He was sinless. This, however, is only one aspect of the doctrine of Origen; for its further development we must look elsewhere; this contains that

[1] vii. 17.

[2] *εἰκος γὰρ εἶναι ἐν τῇ φύσει τῶν πραγμάτων κατά τινας ἀπορρήτους καὶ δυσλήπτους τοῖς πολλοῖς λόγους φύσιν τοιαύτην ὡς ἕνα δίκαιον ὑπὲρ τοῦ κοινοῦ ἀποθανόντα ἑκουσίως, ἀποτροπιασμοὺς ἐμποιεῖν φαύλωι δαιμονίων*—i. 31.

[3] Idem.

part which he deemed of most service for apologetic purposes, in a discussion with a Greek who had cast ridicule upon the cross. Origen points to many of the incidents that attended the death of Christ as revealing His moral greatness. When condemned, He did not bewail, nor give way to any unworthy emotion or utterance.[1] The cruelty with which He was punished only vividly brought out His manliness and gentleness.[2] His silence in the midst of scourges and many indignities displayed a higher degree of fortitude than any word spoken by the Greeks in similar circumstances. He endured all with the utmost meekness, speaking no ignoble nor angry words to those who outraged Him. He who was silent under the scourging, and endured every insult with such meekness, could not in a spirit of ignoble timidity, as some have fancied, have said, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me. Nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt." This prayer was the prayer of true piety. For no one regards a contingency as inevitable, though he may submit to that which may befall him when the time calls for it. Christ spoke not as one who merely endured, but as well pleased with that which might happen to Him.[3] He did not say absolutely, "Let this cup pass," but added with pious reserve, "if it be possible." Origen mentions another interpretation.

[1] ii. 34. [2] viii. 43.

[3] *οὐκ ἐνδεδωκότος ἦν, εὐαρεστουμένου δὲ τοῖς συμβαίνουσι*—vii. 55.

Jesus spoke these words from a spirit of philanthropy towards the Jews, knowing what miseries would fall upon them because of the outrages which they inflicted on Him. As if He had said, "Since my drinking of this cup will cause God to abandon the whole nation, I pray that, if it be possible, this cup may pass; so that Thy portion, for their insolence towards me, may not be utterly forsaken by Thee."[1] Origen does not say whether he accepts this interpretation or not, but he might consistently have done so. For while he maintains that in the miracles which attended the crucifixion there is proof that He who was crucified possessed something divine and superior to the mass of men,[2] he sees in the calamities which have fallen upon the Jews a stronger and more abiding testimony. It is, indeed, not always possible to trace a direct connection between defiance of God and the punishment of that defiance; for God does not openly punish even those who insult His divinity and seek to annihilate faith in Providence;[3] but the death of Jesus has been terribly and unmistakably avenged. Within forty-two years after the crucifixion Jerusalem was destroyed and the whole nation overthrown.[4] The city was overturned from the foundation and rendered desolate. The inhabitants were deemed by God to be unworthy of civic life.[5] With the city fell the temple and its venerable worship.[6] Alone among the nations

[1] ii. 25. [2] ii. 33. [3] ii. 35. [4] iv. 22. [5] viii. 42. [6] ii. 78.

have the Jews been driven from their capital and the place sacred to their national worship.[1] "Pilate may not have been punished as Pentheus was. It was not he, but the Jewish nation, who condemned Christ; and has it not been torn in pieces, and scattered over the whole world, and mangled worse than Pentheus was mangled?"[2] If they have neither a plot of ground nor a home, it is only because of their sin, especially because of their sin against Jesus.[3]

XI. For confirmation of the claims of Jesus, Origen repeatedly appeals to the rapid and triumphant march of the Gospel. Hardly less wonderful than the transformation which it wrought was the miraculous progress it had made since it was first promulgated. It advanced by its own inherent energy. "When the sower went forth to sow," the mere teaching apart from any external force sufficed.[4] Jesus formed the conception of a universal empire in the hearts of men, and Origen gives special emphasis to the nature and simplicity of the weapons by which His ideal was realised. "Was He a man, who dared to sow throughout the whole world His religion and teaching? Could He without divine power have accomplished His design and vanquished all opponents, kings and all in

[1] ii. 8.

[2] ὅπερ καταδεδίκασται ὑπὸ θεοῦ σπαραχθὲν καὶ εἰς πᾶσαν τὴν γῆν ὑπὲρ τὸν Πενθέως σπαραγμὸν διασπαρέν—ii. 34.

[3] viii. 69. Cf. Tertull. Adv. Jud., c. 13.

[4] iv. 9.

authority, the Roman Senate, rulers, and people? Had only the prudent been converted, it would be less wonderful; but He transforms the most irrational, and such as are enslaved by passions, who because of their irrationality are converted with more difficulty to a better way of life. But because Christ is the 'power of God' and the 'wisdom of the Father,' He has done such works and is still doing them. We, then, will not cease to believe in God according to the teaching of Jesus, nor cease in our desire to convert them who are truly blind to the worship of God. They may abuse us, if they will, for our blindness; they, who are the true seducers, may accuse us of seducing men. If it be seduction, it is verily a noble seduction; for by it the intemperate become prudent, or enter upon the way to prudence, the unjust become just, the cowardly and unmanly become manly and persevering in their conflict to maintain their piety towards God, the Creator of the universe."[1] The resolution to present His doctrine to all men everywhere, and not in one corner of the globe merely, is an evidence of surpassing greatness of mind and divine magnanimity.[2] And this resolution, superhuman in its nature and aims, has proved no empty dream.[3] In this respect He stands alone. He accomplished what

[1] ii. 79.

[2] μετὰ ὑπερβαλλούσης μεγαλονοίας καὶ θείας μεγαλοφροσύνης—i. 11.

[3] iv. 4; vi. 11.

He dared to conceive in spite of the forces arrayed against Him.[1] He has scattered the seeds of His pure religion everywhere.[2] His teaching has mastered men of every nature, and been received by men of every race.[3] The more men have sought to crush it, the more powerful has it become.[4] Obstacles have been transformed into material for its growth.[5] Taking up the sneer of Celsus at the newness and poverty of Jesus, Origen refutes him with his own weapons. Did Jesus appear only a very few years ago? Be it so. Could He then in these few years without divine aid have extended His teaching to so many, Greeks and barbarians, wise and unthinking, and implanted in them so great devotion to Christianity that they will rather die than forswear it—a thing unknown in the history of opinion?[6] We acknowledge that He was poor; but is not that very poverty a proof of His divinity? He adopted no policy of concession like Simon, who taught that idolatry was a matter of indifference.[7] He had none of the adventitious advantages which enable men to gain distinction. He was not the citizen of a great country, nor the child of wealthy parents. Born in poverty and narrow circumstances, without the advantage of any course of learning, untaught in the methods of argument by which men become popular leaders

[1] i. 27, 3. [2] viii. 79. [3] ii. 13; viii. 59; v. 62; vii. 41; i. 28.
[4] vii. 26; i. 3. [5] iv. 32.
[6] ὅπερ οὐδεὶς ὑπὲρ ἄλλου δόγματος ἱστόρηται ποιεῖν—i. 26. [7] vi. 11.

and draw crowds of hearers, He yet devoted Himself to the promulgation of new doctrines, introducing a system which reverenced the prophets, while it destroyed the customs of the Jews, and, above all, abolished the Greek observances about the gods. Whence did He derive His knowledge of a judgment by God, with punishment for the evil and reward for the good? He won over to His doctrine not the uncultivated merely, but others who had insight into the hidden purport of what seemed to be paltry. Origen quotes from Plato the reply of Themistocles to the Seriphian who had tauntingly told him that his great reputation was not due to his own character and gifts, but to the country in which he had been born: "I should not have been so famous if I had been a native of Seriphus, nor would you have been a Themistocles if you had been born an Athenian."[1] "But Jesus, who was not only a Seriphian, but the most ignoble, as it were, of Seriphians, has stirred the whole world of men more than Pythagoras, or Plato, or any wise man, or king, or general, in any part of the world."[2] Few men excel in many things; but He, apart from all other virtues, is admired for wisdom, for miracles, and leadership. He won over adherents not by the methods which a

[1] Repub., i. 330 A.

[2] ἀλλὰ καὶ Σεριφίων (ὡς ἔστιν εἰπεῖν) ὁ ἀγεννέστατος δεδύνηται σεῖσαι τὴν πᾶσαν ἀνθρώπων οἰκουμένην . . . ὑπὲρ Πυθαγόραν καὶ Πλάτωνα καί τινας ἄλλους τῶν ὁποιποτοῦν τῆς οἰκουμένης σοφῶν ἢ βασιλέων ἢ στρατηγῶν—i. 29.

tyrant or a robber or a rich man might pursue, but as a Teacher of the doctrine touching the God over all and the worship due to Him, and of all those ethical precepts by living according to which a man may enjoy communion with God. In addition to all other obstacles, He died by the dishonourable death of crucifixion. This was enough to extinguish the reputation which He had acquired; and if the disciples had been formerly deceived, this would have caused them to abandon their delusion and condemn Him who had deluded them.[1] "The disciples were worthless publicans." If they were, is not this convincing evidence to every fair inquirer that they taught Christianity by divine power? They did not gain hearers by power of speech or rhetorical artifice. In this way the divinity of the message was made plain. Had Jesus used the services of men who were wise according to the common conception, He might with reason have been suspected of adopting a method akin to that of philosophers who are the heads of a sect. But who, on looking to fishermen who had not learned the very rudiments of letters,[2] proclaiming boldly their faith in Jesus, would not ask, Whence did they obtain this persuasive power?[3] If they were worthless, it is a striking tribute to His healing efficacy. For by His power these notorious sinners made such progress that they became patterns of holiest living to those who

[1] i. 30. [2] *μηδὲ τὰ πρῶτα γράμματα μεμαθηκότας*—i. 62. [3] Idem.

embraced the Gospel through their instrumentality.[1] Jesus is not to be classed along with the national gods or demons of the heathens, for He has shown that He is superior to them all by taking adherents from all their provinces,[2] and not less by the very loftiness of His self-confidence. No national god or demon prevents men from giving honour to other gods or demons; He alone, with conscious superiority, brooks no rival, and forbids men to acknowledge others as divine.[3] If we divest this thought of Origen of its temporary form, we may put it in this way. By His impatience of falsehood Christ showed Himself to be the Truth; by the very absoluteness and exclusiveness of the homage which He demanded, He declared His divinity; to claim less than absolute sovereignty would have been to acknowledge that He had no real claim to any; as the Son of God He could ask so much; as the Son of God He could ask no less.

XII. The union of God and man in the person of Jesus Christ is attested by the creation and reproduction of a new spiritual type. "In Him began the union of the divine and the human, so that the human by intercourse with the divine might become divine not in Jesus only, but in all who with faith

[1] i. 63. [2] viii. 4. [3] iii. 36.

take up the life which Jesus taught."[1] The incarnation is thus not altogether an isolated fact; God has entered into the life of humanity, and thereby made it possible for men to obtain moral yet real union with Him. Christ is the first and perfect embodiment of an ideal which may be reproduced imperfectly in other men, but only through Him. The incarnation is the apotheosis of humanity.

[1] ἀπ' ἐκείνου ἤρξατο θεία καὶ ἀνθρωπίνη συνυφαίνεσθαι φύσις· ἵν' ἡ ἀνθρωπίνη τῇ πρὸς τὸ θειότερον κοινωνίᾳ γένηται θεία οὐκ ἐν μόνῳ τῷ Ἰησοῦ, ἀλλὰ καὶ πᾶσι τοῖς μετὰ τοῦ πιστεύειν ἀναλαμβάνουσι βίον ὃν Ἰησοῦς ἐδίδαξεν—iii. 28.

CHAPTER V.

THE CHURCH AND ITS ADHERENTS.

The attack of Celsus on the Church is marked by the insight that is born of keen hostility. He scoffs at its divisions; he attacks the principle of blind unreasoning faith which it demanded from its votaries: he seeks to discredit the Christian system by aspersing the intellectual and moral character of its adherents, as well as by assailing its peculiar dogmas.

I. To the eye of Celsus the divisions in the Church were only an evidence of the spirit of revolt to which Christianity owed its origin. The sense of a common danger at first enforced unity; but as the organisation grew, its true spirit was revealed; endless divisions arose. These sects had nothing in common but the name of Christians, and would not yield one jot for the sake of concord; nay, so inherent was the spirit of disunion in the Church and its followers, that if

all men desired to become Christians they themselves would not desire it.

In answer to the charge of division, Origen draws a sharp line of distinction between the teaching of the Church and that of the adherents of the various forms of Gnosticism. As in philosophy there are Epicureans who, by their denial of Providence, show that they are not true philosophers; so those who call themselves Gnostics, and introduce monstrous fictions which are not approved by the followers of Jesus, are not true Christians. They may divide men, if they will, into "carnal" and "spiritual," and speak as if they were saved or lost from natural constitution: what is that "to us of the Church" by whom such teaching is condemned?[1] Many charges brought forward by Celsus are aimless, so far as we are concerned: we join in his condemnation; for we, who are "of the Church which alone is named after Christ," also say that none of these opinions, which he quotes against us, is true.[2] Mark, however, this distinction between us and them: no one who adheres to the Ophites or kindred sects will contend unto death in defence of that which he deems to be the truth.[3]

This method of disproof might have satisfied a rigid upholder of traditionalism and ecclesiastical

[1] *καὶ τί τοῦτο πρὸς ἡμᾶς, τοὺς ἀπὸ τῆς ἐκκλησίας*—v. 61.
[2] viii. 16.
[3] vii. 40.

authority, but could not satisfy a thinker like Origen. He goes to the root of the matter, and, instead of denying the existence of heresies, virtually maintains that they have always existed, that they sprang from the working of the Greek mind on Christian truth, that they testify to the importance and vitality of the Christian faith, and that they are at once the symbol and the result of an enlightened intellectual interest in Christianity. The statement of Celsus, that at the outset there was absolute unity of religious belief among the diciples of Jesus, he shows to be false. Even among the eyewitnesses of Jesus, discussions arose in regard to the relation of Judaism to Christianity. Paul indicates that on the doctrine of the resurrection there were wide divergences of opinion. The allusion to "vain babblings, and oppositions of gnosis falsely so called," points in the same direction.[1] And such divisions, so far from being a ground of cavil, are a tribute to Christianity,—to the importance of its principle, and its usefulness to men. Only in this way do heresies spring up. "Because the art of healing is useful and necessary to man, many discussions in regard to the art of healing arise; and, as a consequence, in medical science among the Greeks, and probably among the barbarians, there are many "heresies." The same principle applies to philosophy. By its promise of truth, by laying down the

[1] iii. 11.

knowledge of things that are, by prescribing how we ought to live, and by attempting to teach what is useful to the race of men, it raises questions which admit of great diversity of opinion, and, on this account, many "heresies" exist in philosophy of more or less repute. Another illustration is found in Judaism, with its varied interpretation of the Mosaic writings and the prophetic discourses. In like manner, since Christianity presented itself to men as an object demanding veneration,—not to the most enslaved only, as Celsus supposes, but to many of the Greeks who were men of learning,—heresies of necessity arose, not at all because of factions and the love of strife, but because of the eager desire of many of the learned to understand the truths of Christianity. Hence among those who were at one in recognising the books as divine, heresies sprang up. These took their name from men who alike admired the origin of the Word, but were led on various plausible grounds to divergent views. But as no one would with reason shun the art of healing because of its heresies, nor any one with any regard for the fitness of things hate philosophy on such grounds, so we should not condemn the sacred books of Moses and the prophets because of the heresies among the Jews."[1] Why not accept a similar apology for the heresies of the Christians? How very wonderful was the language

[1] iii. 12.

of Paul concerning these!—"For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you."[1] As in the science of medicine he is approved who has been disciplined in various "heresies," and has chosen the more excellent after a fair examination of many; as in philosophy he holds an advanced position who, after obtaining the knowledge and discipline of many systems, has attached himself to that which is commended by most weighty reasons; so, in the judgment of Origen, "he who has carefully considered the heresies of Judaism and Christianity is the wisest Christian."[2]

The assertion of Celsus that the spirit of division was so deeply rooted in the very constitution of the Church, that if all men wished to become Christians, the Christians themselves would not desire it, is characterised by Origen as a lie on the face of it. In evidence he points to the enthusiasm with which they seek to propagate the Gospel in town and country, and to the unselfish motives by which that activity is animated. The motive of gaining riches cannot be charged against them, as they get nothing for their support, or at the most the barest necessaries; and if, now that the Church contains within its ranks some adherents

[1] 1 Cor. xi. 19.

[2] οὕτως εἴποιμ' ἂν καὶ τὸν ἐπιμελῶς ἐνιδόντα ταῖς Ἰουδαισμοῦ καὶ Χριστιανισμοῦ αἱρέσεσι σοφώτατον Χριστιανὸν γενέσθαι—iii. 13.

who are rich or in positions of honour, and some delicate and well-born women who receive the teachers of the Word, there may seem some point in the insinuation that some become Christian teachers because of the little glory which it confers, such a suspicion could not reasonably be entertained in regard to the first teachers. And to-day the credit which they are supposed to receive from their fellow-Christians, especially when such honour is not attained by all, is by no means an equivalent for the positive discredit which they meet with from the rest of mankind.[1]

II. Though broken up into many factions, the Christians, according to Celsus, were at one in demanding from their adherents an irrational faith. He declares that their watchword was, "Do not examine, but believe;" he accuses them of blind acceptance of supernatural dogmas; he charges the teachers with bringing forward no arguments as Plato did, and with calling for immediate assent to what was incredible, for a faith that increased with the incredibility of the message.

In response to this charge, which touched him keenly, Origen points out that in this respect the teachers of the Gospel were only acting like all teachers of philosophy. When a man at first attaches

[1] iii. 9.

himself to any school, he does so not after an examination of the arguments for and against the different systems, but from a belief that one is superior, from an irrational impulse to adopt one and ignore the others. Thus one becomes a Stoic, another a Platonist, and another an Epicurean.[1] Since, then, belief in the founder of some school or another is a matter of necessity, why not rather believe in the supreme God, and in Christ who has taught us to reverence God alone? Faith, moreover, as a principle, is not limited to the sphere of Christian truth. All human affairs depend on faith. Nobody ploughs or marries without hoping for the best: faith emboldens men to do what lies in the sphere of things unseen,—it holds life together. What more reasonable, then, than to put faith in God the Creator, and in Him who dared to present this truth to all men everywhere, in the face of danger and a dishonourable death?[2]

A bare implicit faith, though capable of being defended, is not to be regarded as a substitute for a reasoned knowledge, but as a necessity. If all men had leisure for speculative inquiry into Christian truth, this method would be universally adopted as the best and only method.[3] In the Christian system speculation on matters of faith holds a prominent

[1] i. 10. [2] i. 11.

[3] *εἰ μὲν οἷόν τε πάντας καταλιπόντας τὰ τοῦ βίου πράγματα σχολάζειν τῷ φιλοσοφεῖν, ἄλλην ὁδὸν οὐ μεταδιωκτέον οὐδενὶ ἢ ταύτην μόνην*—i. 9.

place. The interpretation of enigmas in the Prophets and parables in the Gospels, as also of countless incidents and laws which had a symbolical meaning, affords great scope for investigation. Many cannot follow this path because of the necessities of existence or other causes: better surely for such to give an irrational belief which issues in reformation of character, than to continue in an evil life.[1]

To exalt faith at the expense of wisdom is opposed to the teaching of Scripture. Christ gave special honour to those who longed after His wisdom. He promised to send to believers "wise men and scribes."[2] The teaching of Paul is to the same effect. He censures those who believe "in vain."[3] In speaking of the gifts of God, he puts in the first rank "divine wisdom"; and next to it, in the second rank, that which is called "knowledge"; and third (since it is necessary that even the simplest should be saved who attend to the service of God to the best of their ability),[4] "faith."[5] And on the same principle he puts the working of miracles and the charism of healing in a lower position than the charism of words.[6] Yet the absence or presence of these gifts does not affect our standing in relation to God. The faith of the ignorant not less than the rational piety of the more

[1] i. 9; iii. 38, 39. [2] iii. 46. [3] vi. 10. See 1 Cor. xv. 2.
[4] ἐπεὶ σώζεσθαι χρὴ καὶ τοὺς ἁπλουστέρους—vi. 13.
[5] 1 Cor. xii. 8, 9. [6] vi. 13; iii. 37, 46.

intelligent is accepted by Him, for it is through the High Priest who has instructed men in the pure service of God that both send up their prayers and thanksgivings to the Creator of the universe.[1]

Origen himself was wont to teach in harmony with these principles. In his discourses to the community he brought forward the divinest elements of Christian doctrines, when intelligent men were present in large numbers; but when those assembled were of the simpler class, who required what is figuratively termed "milk," he concealed and passed by the deeper truths.[2] From those whom he could influence by no other appeal, he demanded faith only; but when a demonstration by questions and answers was possible, he adopted this method.[3] In regard to the end of the world and a judgment to come, for example, he who wished to present Christian truth in a philosophical fashion would endeavour to establish it by all sorts of arguments, whether drawn from the divine Scriptures or from a process of ratiocination; but it was the duty of the majority, who were incapable of following the varied speculations of the wisdom of God, to intrust themselves to God and to the Saviour of our race, and to be satisfied with His *ipse dixit*.[4] Expediency de-

[1] vii. 46. [2] iii. 52. [3] vi. 10.

[4] δεήσει δὲ τὸν πολὺν καὶ ἁπλούστερον καὶ μὴ δυνάμενον παρακολουθεῖν τοῖς ποικιλωτάτοις τῆς σοφίας τοῦ θεοῦ θεωρήμασιν ἐμπιστεύσαντα ἑαυτὸν θεῷ καὶ τῷ σωτῆρι τοῦ γένους ἡμῶν, τούτου μᾶλλον ἀρκεσθῆναι τῷ "αὐτὸς ἔφα" ἢ ἄλλου οὑτινοσοῦν—iv. 9.

mands this. The multitude only required to be taught that sinners would be punished: to interpret what that implied, and commit such interpretation to writing, might be dangerous; for were there not many who were hardly restrained even by the fear of eternal punishments from rushing into extreme wickedness and disorders?[1] Origen, then, does not deny the charge of blind faith: he shows that such faith is limited in its range, and assigns to it a subordinate place. Irrational belief in the Christian system is not a thing in itself desirable, but is rather a necessary evil in consequence of the physical needs and mental weakness of men: it is justified by expediency and its ethical results.

III. For the prominent position assigned by the Christian Church to unreasoning faith Celsus found a ready explanation. Its adherents were mainly plebeian in rank and culture. As if education were an evil, they sought out the unintelligent, invited to their mysteries the ignorant and stupid, and in this way drove off wise men. Like jugglers, they showed off their tricks before slaves, women, and children, and caught nothing but rustics.

With reference to the general accusation, Origen points out that in the Church of Christ, as elsewhere, the more uncultivated of necessity outnumber the more intelligent,[2] and disproves the charge of pre-

[1] vi. 26. [2] i. 27.

ferring such by appealing to the many passages which inculcated wisdom "in the ancient Jewish writings which Christians also use, and not less in the books written after the time of Jesus which are believed by the Churches of God to be divine." The Book of Psalms is full of wise teaching. In a prayer to God David says, "The secret and hidden things of Thy wisdom Thou didst manifest to me."[1] In the writings of Solomon, who put great thoughts in few words, are found many praises of wisdom and incitements to its attainment. Enigmas, dark sayings, parables, and problems were introduced for the very purpose of training the understanding of believers and making them wise.[2] So of the parables of Christ it is recorded that the crowd were deemed worthy only of exoteric words, while the disciples learned the interpretation in private.[3] So far is Origen from regarding education as an evil, that to him it is the pathway to virtue, and knowledge the one stable and permanent reality.[4] But who are the educated? Will even the wise among the Greeks reckon as such those who hold erroneous opinions? All men will acknowledge that it is a good thing to study the best words. But

[1] Ps. li. 6, as in the LXX.

[2] *οὕτω δὲ βούλεται σοφοὺς εἶναι ἐν τοῖς πιστεύουσιν ὁ λόγος, ὥστε ὑπὲρ τοῦ γυμνάσαι τὴν σύνεσιν τῶν ἀκουόντων τὰ μὲν ἐν αἰνίγμασι, τὰ δὲ ἐν τοῖς καλουμένοις σκοτεινοῖς λόγοις λελαληκέναι, τὰ δὲ διὰ παραβολῶν, καὶ ἄλλα διὰ προβλημάτων*—iii. 45.

[3] iii. 46.

[4] iii. 49, 72.

what words can be so described save such as are true and give a stimulus to virtue?[1] Only those who belong to God are truly wise.[2] The epithets "uneducated" and "slavish" are fittingly applied, not to men who are ignorant of Greek learning, but to those who address supplications for health to that which is powerless, who pray for life to that which is dead. From this condition of true ignorance the very lowliest Christian is freed,[3] while the wisest understand and lay hold of the divine hope.[4] Instead of seeking out by preference the unintelligent, we do all that in us lies to secure that our assembly be formed of men of prudence.[5] If you use the word "unintelligent" in a moral sense, we acknowledge that we seek out such in the same spirit that a philanthropic physician seeks out the sick. "If by 'unintelligent' you mean 'not clever,' we acknowledge that we seek to improve such as far as possible, but do not desire to form of such materials the Christian Church.[6] On the contrary, we desire rather the clever and acute who are able to follow the elucidation of the enigmas and words in the Law, the Prophets, and the Gospels, which were spoken with a secret meaning." Celsus despised these because he made no effort to enter into the mind of the writers.[7]

[1] iii. 49.
[2] viii. 10.
[3] *τοὺς ἐσχάτους τῶν ἐν ἡμῖν*—vi. 14.
[4] vi. 14.
[5] iii. 52.
[6] *οὐ μὴν ἐκ τούτων βούλομαι συστῆσαι τὸ Χριστιανῶν ἄθροισμα*—iii. 74.
[7] iii. 74.

The idea cherished by some that the Gospel does not desire to attract wise men, is probably due to the words of Paul.[1] These words, be it noted, were written to Greeks who were greatly puffed up on account of their wisdom. The Word declares that those who are occupied only with sensible things, and regard them as all, are wise in respect of this world, but not wise in respect of the things intelligible, unseen, and eternal. Because it is a "wisdom of this age" it comes to nought; but by the "wisdom of God" the soul turns from things here to the blessedness with God and His kingdom, and learns to despise as transitory things seen and sensible.[2] Human wisdom is an exercise for the soul, but divine wisdom is its end.[3] Paul, moreover, does not say that "no" wise man after the flesh is called, but "not many." And in specifying the qualifications of bishops, he gives prominence to aptness in teaching, on the ground that the bishop must be able to refute gainsayers and shut the mouths of vain talkers by the wisdom that is in him. What is true in the taunt of Celsus is that the unlearned as well as the instructed are invited by us; for the Word promises to heal such, and make all worthy of God.[4] But the Gospel is to be judged by its intelligent expositors: the Word is not to be censured though some in their ignorance may not have

[1] 1 Cor. i. 18. [2] iii. 47. [3] vi. 13. [4] iii. 48.

a clear perception of humility, or other virtues, and doctrines. Why not pardon those who aim at that which is superior, even if they miss the mark?[1] If any seeming disciple of Christ lives wantonly, contrary to the teaching of Jesus, it would be most unreasonable to charge the Word with his impurity: in like manner, if the Word of God invites men to cultivate wisdom, it is not responsible for those that decry it and advocate ignorance.[2] The Gospel is a universal Gospel, and addressed to all, even to slaves. They are ennobled by the Word when they receive freedom of thought. The ambassadors of Christianity admit that they are "debtors to the Greeks and the barbarians, to the wise and the foolish." Do not philosophers invite slaves to the pursuit of philosophy? "Are we then to condemn Pythagoras for inciting Zamolxis to virtue, or Zeno in respect of Persæus; or, to take a modern instance, are we to censure those who induced Epictetus to become a philosopher? If not, why not acknowledge that we are moved by a spirit of philanthropy when we seek to heal every rational nature by the medicine of the Word, and bring it into fellowship with God, the Creator of the universe?"[3] To say that the ignorant character of the mass of the Christian adherents compels wise men to stand aloof is ridiculous. As well say that no wise man

[1] iii. 72; vi. 15. [2] iii. 44. Cf. vi. 7, 37. [3] iii. 54.

would obey the laws of Solon or Lycurgus, or any other lawgiver, because the ignorant multitude were under their authority. The argument is stronger if by a man of sense you mean a man of virtue These lawgivers were guided in their legislation solely by the consideration of what was expedient in the interests of the governed: so God, in enacting laws through Jesus Christ for men everywhere, sought to lead the unthinking to a better life in such a way and to such an extent as was possible in their case.[1]

IV. In the eyes of Celsus the moral nakedness of the Christians was not less conspicuous than their intellectual poverty. They were essentially a carnal and sense-bound race. They exercised an evil influence over the young. They gave an indiscriminate invitation to the dregs and rabble, and called for adherents such as a robber-chief would welcome. What was this wide opening of the gates to all, this strange preference for sinners, but an admission that they could not win over or influence the good?

Such accusations may seem to us beneath notice, but the refutation of them was not superfluous when as yet great ignorance of the character of Christians prevailed, and absurd charges were possible. It gave Origen the opportunity to present the Christian ideal

[1] iii. 73.

of morals, and to show how it was realised in individual believers as well as in the churches as a whole. The charge of being carnal is dismissed quickly by him. When the Spirit of God dwells in a man, he is no longer in the flesh. Absolute purity of thought is the goal of the Christian's efforts and prayers.[1] Such is the power of the teaching of Jesus, that many who are despised by Celsus as fools and slaves abstain even from lawful intercourse. They require no hemlock, like the Athenian hierophant, to repress concupiscence.[2] Nay, even in the case of the ignorant and simple who have not attained to a rational piety, but simply believe in the God over all and in His only-begotten Son the Word, there is often found a superior gravity and simplicity of morals.[3] The mere declaration of faith in God through Jesus is vain, unless it be attended by a divine moral force manifested in life and character.[4] The true Christian fights for truth unto the death; or, if he flies, it is not from selfish cowardice, but for the sake of benefiting others by continuing in life.[5] It is unreasonable to depart from life save on the ground of piety; but when the alternative is placed before us, of life with disobedience to the commands of Jesus and death with obedience to His words, we choose death.[6] For general testimony as to the true

[1] vii. 45. [2] vii. 48. [3] vii. 49.
[4] i. 62. [5] i. 62; viii. 44. [6] viii. 55.

character of Christians, Origen appeals with confidence to their neighbours and associates.[1] Of the moral influence of the teachers he speaks with not less assurance. Is that an evil force which checks the wantonness of women, and curbs their furious passion for theatres, dances, and superstition, and which inculcates on lads verging on manhood the value and the duty of self-restraint?[2] Is it the work of jugglers to induce men to cultivate piety towards the God of the universe, and other kindred virtues, or to convert men from despising the divine, and from doing whatever is contrary to right reason?[3] In teaching the Gospel to children, it is true that a certain measure of secrecy is employed. If the father or teacher be a lover of virtue, no secrecy is needed; from such, a favourable hearing of the message is certain. When an opposite course is adopted, we are only following the practice of philosophers who seize every opportunity to instil their secrets into the hearts of the young, when the fathers, who regard their teaching as idle and unprofitable, are absent. If it be an offence to turn away the young from teachers whose theme is unseemly comedies and licentious iambics, which can neither profit the reader nor the hearers unless they are perused in a philosophical spirit, to such charge we plead guilty.[4]

In defence of the character of the Churches gener-

[1] vi. 40. [2] iii. 56. [3] iii. 50. [4] iii. 58.

ally, Origen replies to the taunt about its preference for sinners by showing what is the attitude of the Church to the sinful. "By comparing us to robbers, as if there were any likeness between our ideal and their inclinations, Celsus enrols himself among the number of those who reckoned Jesus among transgressors."[1] Though the Christian may summon persons of the same class that a robber summons, he calls them to a different calling,—he seeks to bind up their wounds, and pour on their inflamed sores healing drugs from the Word.[2] A distinction, too, must be made between the summoning of those that are sick to be cured, and the summoning of those that are healthy to a knowledge of divine things. We begin by exhorting sinners to learn doctrines which will prevent them from sinning; we seek to implant intelligence in the unintelligent, to make children men in understanding, to make the unhappy blessed. Then, when they have made progress and increased in purity, we call them to the mysteries which are reserved for the "perfect."[3] Moreover, from the nature of the case, the number of virtuous converts in our assemblies far exceeds the number of the wicked. The truth of a recompense and judgment by God, who will apportion to each sinner punishment according to right reason, is naturally held with more firmness by the man who, from a consciousness of virtue, has an interest in its truth,

[1] viii. 54. [2] iii. 61. [3] iii. 59, 60, 37.

than by him who is hindered by the very consciousness of guilt from accepting this doctrine,—especially when, through a long course of sinning, the power to return to a better life is almost extinguished.[1] Yet so great is the power of the name of Christ, that we see implanted in many such a philanthropic goodness and gentleness, in all indeed that have truly received the Word touching God and Christ and a future judgment, though not in such as make a hypocritical profession of belief for the sake of temporal comforts.[2]

Origen challenges a comparison of the political ecclesia with that of the Christians. Compared with the assemblies in the cities, whose members are to a great extent superstitious and unjust, the churches of God are as "lights in the world." The worst of those in the Church are superior to many in the assemblies of the people.[3] "The Church of God at Athens, whose only aim is to please the Supreme God, is gentle and orderly; but the assembly of the Athenians is full of factions. The same is true of Corinth and Alexandria. The establishment of such churches of God in every city will create in every fair and truth-loving inquirer admiration for Him who conceived and executed such a design." A comparison of "counsellors" and "rulers" reveals

[1] iii. 65.

[2] ἐν τοῖς μὴ διὰ τὰ βιωτικὰ ἤ τινας χρείας ἀνθρωπικὰς ὑποκριναμένοις —i. 67.

[3] iii. 29.

the marked superiority of similar officials in the Church. Nay, even in the case of "counsellors" and "rulers" in the Church who are, comparatively speaking, very remiss in duty, will be found generally a higher and growing standard of virtue.[1] Among Christians, properly so called, wicked persons do not exist. In any case, they do not come to the common prayers, or are excluded if they do come: even for such to intrude secretly is a very rare occurrence.[2] This result is accomplished by the measures adopted to secure a high moral standard in the adherents. Philosophers like the Cynics discourse publicly to chance hearers, and do not sift them; any one who wills, stands and listens: it is otherwise with the Christians. "Before they admit any one into their community, they test the souls of those who wish to hear, teach them privately, and only admit them when they have proved by growing consecration their desire to live a better life. Among those admitted are two classes — those just introduced who have not yet received the symbol of purification,[3] and those who, to the utmost of their ability, have shown that they are resolved only to will and to do that which the Christians approve. To prevent persons of evil character from coming to our common

[1] *ἐπὶ τῶν σφόδρα ἀποτυγχανομένων βουλευτῶν καὶ ἀρχόντων*—iii. 30.
[2] iv. 27.
[3] *οὐδέπω τὸ σύμβολον τοῦ ἀποκεκαθάρθαι ἀνειληφότων*—iii. 51.

assemblies, we appoint some whose duty it is to inquire carefully into the lives and ways of those who approach; but those who are free from vice we welcome with our whole heart, and strive day by day to make them better. All that sin, especially the licentious, are driven out. The holy school of the Pythagoreans[1] reckoned as dead those who apostatised, and set up cenotaphs for them; so the Christians look on those who have been mastered by lust or any monstrous sin as dead to God, and mourn for them as dead: if they show a noteworthy change of conduct, they regard them as having risen from the dead, and readmit them after a longer interval and at a later period than those admitted at first; but those who lapse are excluded from all rule or office in the Church of God."[2]

V. In their doctrine of the resurrection of the body Celsus saw the clearest evidence that the Christians were carnal. It was a hope for worms to cherish, not for men. Such criticism might be applied to some theories of the resurrection, but not to that of Origen. He was equally opposed to the views of those who held there was no resurrection, and of the "simple and flesh-lovers"[3] who fancied that the re-

[1] *τὸ μὲν τῶν Πυθαγορείων σεμνὸν δίδασκαλεῖον*—iii. 51. [2] Idem.
[3] "Simplices et philosarcas."—(Letter of Jerome to Pammachius.) Lomm., xvii. 61, 62.

surrection-body would be in all respects the same as the present. A resurrection there must be, as it would be a proof that God was unjust or impotent if the body, which was the partner of the soul in tortures and sufferings, were not to share in the reward:[1] identity there must be, for it would not be fair that one body should suffer and another be crowned.[2] But in what consists this identity? It is not the teaching of Scripture that the dead will rise with the same flesh which has undergone no change for the better.[3] St Paul teaches that the body which is sown is not the body that shall be.[4] God gives to each seed its own body, and, from that which is sown and cast naked into the earth, a resurrection, as it were, takes place.[5] "We do not say, then, that the corrupted body will return to its original nature, for the corrupted grain of corn does not return to its original state. But we say that as in the case of the grain of corn a stalk arises, so a certain principle of relation is implanted in the body, and that, from this which is not corrupted, the body will rise in incorruption."[6]

[1] Lomm., xvii. 55.—(Fragment from lost treatise, De Resurrectione, i.)

[2] Lomm., xvii. 62.

[3] *οὔτε μὲν οὖν ἡμεῖς, οὔτε τὰ θεῖα γράμματα αὐταῖς φησι σαρξὶ μηδεμίαν μεταβολὴν ἀνειληφυίαις τὴν ἐπὶ τὸ βέλτιον*—v. 18.

[4] 1 Cor. xv. 37.

[5] *ἀπὸ τοῦ σπειρομένου καὶ γυμνοῦ βαλλομένου ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν . . . οἱονεὶ ἀνάστασιν γίγνεσθαῖ*—v. 18.

[6] *Λέγομεν γὰρ, ὥσπερ ἐπὶ τοῦ κόκκου τοῦ σίτου ἐγείρεται στάχυς,*

What the nature of this seminal germ is Origen does not distinctly say: it is a substratum which is capable of receiving such qualities as the Creator wills.[1] The resurrection-body will vary according to the deserts of the individual.[2] Origen holds that his theory is not borrowed from the doctrine of metempsychosis;[3] that it is in harmony both with the teaching of the Church of Christ and the greatness of the divine promise.[4]

οὕτω λόγος τις ἔγκειται τῷ σώματι, ἀφ' οὗ μὴ φθειρομένου ἐγείρεται τὸ σῶμα ἐν ἀφθαρσίᾳ—v. 23.

[1] iv. 57; v. 19.

[2] "Qui beatius hic vixerit, corpus ejus in resurrectione diviniore splendore fulgebit: . . . huic vero qui in malitia consumpserit tempus sibi vitæ præsentis indultum, tale dabitur corpus, quod sufficere et perdurare tantummodo possit in pœnis."—Lomm., xvii. 58.

[3] vii. 32.

[4] v. 22.

CHAPTER VI.

CHRISTIANITY AND THE EMPIRE.

CHRISTIANITY came into collision with the State chiefly on two grounds—one external and general, one internal and special. It was an unlawful guild whose members, by refusing to take part in the public sacrifices to and for the emperor, were held to be guilty of treason; and as a religion it was possessed of distinctive and novel characteristics, inasmuch as it was not national in its origin, and was moreover intolerant of all others. A brief survey of the relation of Rome to other religions will help to throw light on these charges.

The introduction of new gods was, during the Republic, and even in the early days of the Empire, regarded with keen jealousy. The worship of foreign gods even in private was forbidden.[1] The emperor was not allowed to consecrate a god without the approval of

[1] "Separatim nemo habessit deos; neve novos sive advenas nisi publice adscitos privatim colunto."—Cicero, De Leg., ii. 8.

the Senate.[1] This jealousy was intensified in the case of any religion which had a tendency to excite the minds of men.[2] Even permission to establish a guild not religious was often refused: Trajan was so sensitive to the danger of faction arising from such a cause, that he refused his consent to a proposal of Pliny to institute a guild of firemen in Nicomedia.[3] In all these respects, the Church as a corporate body came into conflict with the traditional policy of Rome. "Your existence is not lawful,"[4] was the response to all the early appeals of the Christians. The Church was a religious guild worshipping a strange god, and the hostility of the authorities was increased by the circumstance that the adherents were largely drawn from the lower classes in the community, and spoke of themselves as a brotherhood. With the deification of the emperor, the general charge of illegality developed into a charge of overt treason; for by refusing to sacrifice to him they were adjudged guilty of the crime of *læsa majestas*.

Apart from this general ground, Christianity was marked by distinctive features which, to the official mind, constituted a source of danger. It was not a national religion. This was a new phenomenon in religious history. To the Romans national and

[1] "Ne qui deus ab imperatore consecraretur, nisi a senatu probatus."—Tert., Apol., c. 5.

[2] Livy, xxv. 1; xxxix. 8.

[3] Epist. ad Traj., 34 (Keil).

[4] "Non licet esse vos."—Tert., Apol., 4.

traditional were convertible terms. Each province, each town, had its own god.[1] The idea was, that religious rites were to be carried out because their ancestors had wished it, and there was no necessity to give any other reason.[2] Lacking these essential notes, Christianity in the eyes of statesmen and philosophers needed no other reason for condemnation; for its existence destroyed the basis of all other religions, and it could not be propagated without creating social disorder. For Christianity refused, as it could not but refuse, to tolerate any form of polytheism.

The law against foreign forms of worship which was at first rigorously enforced gradually fell into desuetude. As the Empire extended by conquest, the number of gods within its pale proportionately increased. To the capital flocked the representatives of the separate nationalities, bringing their own gods along with them. Their worship was only suppressed in cases of flagrant immorality, or when by overactivity on the part of the devotees it threatened to become dangerous.[3] The various forms of polytheism, as a rule, tolerated each other; but there was no merit

[1] "Unicuique etiam provinciæ et civitati suus deus est."—Tert., Apol., 20. "Sua cuique civitati religio, nostra nobis."—Cicero, Pro Flacco, 28.

[2] "Nec me ex ea opinione, quam a majoribus accepi de cultu deorum immortalium, ullius unquam oratio aut docti aut indocti movebit."—Cicero, De Nat. Deor., iii. 2.

[3] Tiberius, *e.g.*, destroyed the temple of Isis.—Joseph., Antiq., xviii. 3, 4.

in such toleration. The worship of the One God, the Creator of the universe, postulated a universal and therefore an intolerant religion. But it was otherwise with polytheism. If more than one god be admitted, the possibility of a limitation of gods disappears. Each, no doubt, claimed the highest attributes for his deity; but there was no conflict of principle, for the dogmatic basis of each was the same. There might be great diversities of ritual; but proselytism, save with a view to the material aggrandisement of a particular temple, was an anomaly. There was no jealousy on the part of the gods themselves, nor on the part of their worshippers. By the close of the Republic the gods of Egypt found a home in the Capitol. "A vacant pedestal," says Jules Simon, "could always be found for every new divinity." [1] Augustus sent presents to the temple at Jerusalem, and pardoned Alexandria in honour of Serapis. Vespasian received miraculous powers from the gods of Egypt. Trajan consulted the gods of Heliopolis. This liberality on the part of the emperors might be ascribed to political or imperial exigencies, but their subjects were not less cosmopolitan. We see from inscriptions that the worshipper of Serapis might be a worshipper of Bellona, that the priest of Isis could be a priest of Cybele, that sometimes one temple was dedicated to two gods, and that the gods themselves gave orders for the consecra-

[1] La Liberté de Conscience, p. 28.

tion of temples to others.[1] The secret of this attitude of mutual conciliation and tolerance lay in the fact that paganism was in essence a ceremonial, not a creed; and even after Christianity had become the State religion, the adherents of paganism still retained the same catholicity of worship.[2] It is easy to understand how a monotheistic religion, believed by its adherents to be destined to become universal, came into necessary antagonism with such syncretism, and evoked the united hostility of all others, and therefore of the State, under whose authority, or with whose tacit connivance the various forms of worship were practised, and which naturally saw in Christianity a revolutionary force likely to disturb social order. For whatever the attitude of the cultivated minority might be, the majority of every community were sincere, often fanatical, worshippers of their particular gods. This is manifest from the unimpeachable testimony of Lucian. At the close of the 'Zeus Tragœdus,' in which, with a running commentary from the unseen but listening gods, an Epicurean puts a Stoic to rout, Hermes tries to console Zeus with the thought that, after all, the evil

[1] For the above details I am indebted to the work of Boissier, La Religion Romaine d'Auguste aux Antonins, vol. i. pp. 334-403; vol. ii. pp. 110-147; and to Friedländer, Sittengeschichte Roms, vol. iii. p. 450 *et seq.*

[2] Beugnot quotes an inscription showing that Prætextatus, the friend of Symmachus, was, among other things, Pontifex Vestæ, Pontifex Solis, Taurobolíatus, and Pater Sacrorum (Histoire de la Destruction du Paganisme, vol. i. p. 444).

was not very serious, seeing that only a few had adopted such teaching, while many held opposite opinions —the majority of the Greeks, the mass of the people, the lowest rabble, and all barbarians.[1]

I. In the forefront of his attack Celsus sought to create a presumption against Christianity by declaring that it was an unlawful and secret association. The charge of secrecy, says Origen, is absurd. Christianity, it is true, like the schools of philosophy, has its esoteric teaching; but Christian dogmas are better known than philosophical principles. Who does not know of the birth of Jesus from a virgin, of His crucifixion, and His resurrection?[2] From what has just been said, the charge of illegality was manifestly true. Origen admits the formal illegality, but protests against it, and justifies the Christian position. Christians alone meet with exceptional treatment, and are denied the liberty of serving God according to their convictions.[3] They must obey the law of truth. If men were forced to live among the Scythians, they would do right to form associations united by a common bond of hostility to barbaric ways. But worse than the Scythian customs are the laws of atheistic polytheism, if truth be taken as umpire.

[1] πλείους Ἑλλήνων, ὁ πολὺς λεὼς, καὶ ὁ σύρφαξ, βάρβαροί τε ἅπαντες —c. 53.

[2] i. 7.

[3] ii. 44, 13.

If it be right to conspire against a usurper, it is right that men should band themselves together to save themselves and others from the tyranny of Satan and falsehood.[1] We can obey no laws that are not in harmony with divine laws. The diversity of laws which obtain in various communities proves that they are not laws properly so called,—only conventional standards, not absolute rules.[2] There is a law which is by nature "king of all." That law is one with the law of God. By it the Christians live, and bid farewell to lawless laws.[3] In language which anticipates the teaching of the eighteenth century, Origen boldly maintains the supremacy of the individual conscience. "There are two laws,—the law of nature, of which God is the enacter, and the written law of cities. When the written law is not opposed to the law of God, it is right that the citizens should not abandon it under pretext of any foreign prescriptions. But when the law of nature—that is, the law of God—ordains what is opposed to the written law, shall we not, consistently with the claims of reason, renounce the written law and take God as our lawgiver, and resolve to live according to His word, even, if need be, at the cost of dangers, toils, death, and disgrace?" Would it not be monstrous to do that which is in harmony with laws which are not laws, and with the wishes of those who uphold them, and

[1] i. 1. [2] viii. 26, 56. [3] v. 40.

despise that which is pleasing to the Creator of the universe? "And if in other matters it is reasonable to prefer the law of nature, which is the law of God, to the written law enacted by men, does not the principle apply with more force to laws about God Himself?"[1] Christianity might be unlawful in the eyes of Roman law, but it was in unison with a higher law, not temporary but eternal, not accidental but absolute,—the law of truth, which was the law of nature, which was the law of God.

Though resolved to do nothing contrary to the law of God, the Christians are not fanatics eager to stir up the wrath of kings and rulers; but still less will they seek to win the favour of those in power by participation in their vices, or by that servile flattery to which no manly spirit will stoop.[2] Origen passes by the general question of the relation of subjects to tyrannical or immoral rulers, because of its demanding much investigation; but his own solution of the problem, though not distinctly stated, is clearly implied. Christians are loyal, for they are the followers of Him who was not the author of sedition but of peace.[3] They do not enter into military service, but fight for the king by "putting on the panoply of God." They do so in obedience to the word of the apostle. "You do not summon your priests to fight, in order that they may offer to your gods the wonted sacrifices with pure hands, un-

[1] v. 37. [2] viii. 65. [3] viii. 14. Cf. iii. 8; v. 33.

stained by blood. As priests, the Christians wrestle in prayer for those who fight in a righteous cause, and for him who rules in righteousness, that all unrighteousness may be overthrown. They vanquish the demons who stir up war and cause oaths to be broken and disturb the peace." They co-operate for the common good by teaching men to despise pleasures that injure the body politic. They cannot enter into battle, but they organise a special army whose bond is piety, whose weapons are prayers.[1] They are true benefactors of their country when they train the citizens in piety towards God, and induce them to be faithful as citizens here by inspiring them with the hope of heavenly citizenship.[2] Except in this indirect way, Christians do not take part in political life. To their duty as citizens of heaven everything else must be subordinated. For this end they sever themselves from those who are estranged from the divine commonwealth:[3] they dare not lose their inheritance in the God over all. If the Lacedæmonian ambassadors refused to do obeisance at the court of Persia on account of their reverence for their only master—the law of Lycurgus—much less can the ambassadors of Christ, whose office is greater and diviner, do homage to any other authority.[4] In each city we recognise another national organisation — a

[1] ἴδιον στρατόπεδον εὐσεβείας συγκροτοῦντες, διὰ τῶν πρὸς τὸ θεῖον ἐντεύξεων—viii. 73.

[2] viii. 74. [3] viii. 5. [4] viii. 6.

divine country—which has been formed by the Word of God.[1] Its rulers are men powerful in word and pure in life. They are appointed, not because of their anxiety for power, but rather when from excess of modesty they are unwilling to undertake the care of the churches. "The rulers themselves discharge their office at the impulse of the great King—the Son of God. The law of God is their only standard. Christians have no desire to avoid the common duties of life, but they must reserve their energies for the diviner and more imperative service of the Church of God, with a view to the salvation of men."[2]

If, then, said Celsus, arguing against teaching akin to this, your religion were to become universal, and men refused to take part either in military or civic affairs, the empire would go to pieces. No, said Origen; if it were to become universal, as it is fast becoming and will one day be,[3] the barbarians would become law-abiding and humane. God rejoices in the harmony of rational souls; and if not "two or three" but the whole Roman Empire were to agree, God would fight for them, and their victory would be assured. If God's promises of victory to the Jewish nation have not been fulfilled, it is not because God has lied, but because these promises were given condi-

[1] ἐν ἑκάστῃ πόλει ἄλλο σύστημα πατρίδος—viii. 75. [2] viii. 75.

[3] πᾶσα μὲν θρησκεία καταλυθήσεται, μόνη δὲ ἡ Χριστιανῶν κρατήσει· ἤτις καὶ μόνη ποτὲ κράτήσει—viii. 68.

tionally on their keeping that law which they violated.[1] If all Romans become Christians, they will pray and overcome their adversaries; or rather they will not war at all, being protected by divine power. The men of God are the salt of the earth: they give to earthly affairs unity and solidarity.[2] Do you say that a universal religion or law is a dream of ignorant fanaticism? Not only is such a law possible, but it is certain that all rational beings will agree to follow one law; that "the Word will one day become master of the whole rational creation, and transform every soul into His own perfection."[3] It was by this claim to, and prophecy of, universal rule, that Christianity came into open collision with the old-world theory of local or national religions.

II. Long before the appearance of the 'True Word' attempts had been made by thinkers of various schools to effect a reconciliation between the manifold forms of polytheism and the philosophical conceptions of God.[4] Harmony was established between the different cults themselves by acknowledging their affinity, and representing them all as only different embodiments of the one universal truth; and by writers who were eager at once to conserve the national worship

[1] viii. 69. [2] viii. 70. [3] viii. 72.

[4] See Boissier, *opus cit.*: Hild's Étude sur les Démons; Champagny, Les Antonins, vol. i. p. 395 *et seq.*; Friedländer, vol. iii. p. 430.

and hold by the teaching of Plato, a solution was sought in a development of the theory of demons. The usual method was to ascribe supreme authority to One and divide his functions among many.[1] By representing the demons as intermediaries between God or the gods and men, they hoped to reconcile religion and philosophy. Plutarch[2] set this view forth in several treatises; but the view most akin to that of Celsus is that elaborated by his immediate precursor or contemporary, Apuleius of Madaura.[3] Of the worship of the crowd, ignorant of philosophy, with no grasp of truth, he speaks with keen contempt.[4] Following Plato, he places at the head of all things the Father and Architect of this universe. God is altogether inaccessible to man. If a man, when raised to the tottering height of a throne, becomes reserved, and passes his life in the inner sanctuary of his dignity, why need the inaccessibility of God excite astonishment?[5] Between God or the chief gods and men are demons who act as interpreters and messengers.[6] He can undergo no emotion, whether of hatred or love,

[1] "Sic plerique disponunt divinitatem, ut imperium summum dominationis esse penes unum, officia ejus penes multa velint."—Tert., Apol., 24.

[2] De Orac. Defectu, De Iside et Osirid., *passim*. See Hild, p. 303 *et seq*.

[3] De Dogmat. Plat., de Deo Socrat. Cf. August., De Civit. Dei, vii.-ix.

[4] De Deo Socrat, vol. ii. p. 960, Valpy's edit. [5] Vol. ii. p. 968.

[6] "Interpretes et salutigeri."—Vol. ii. p. 974.

can be touched neither by anger nor pity, can show neither anguish nor joyfulness, can display neither sudden liking nor aversion.[1] It is different with the demons; for while they have something in common with the immortal gods, unlike them they are liable to human passions. The great variety in forms of worship and sacrifices is to be ascribed to the varied susceptibilities of the demons. Some prefer to be worshipped by night, some by day; some wish to be adored publicly, some in secret; some prefer joyous rites, some prefer austere. The Egyptian gods love to be honoured by loud wailings, the Greek gods for the most part by dances, the barbarian gods by the clanging of cymbals and tambourines. To the same cause is due the diversity in the details of the services in different countries—in the processions, the mysteries, the priestly functions, the sacrificial ritual, the images of gods, the consecration of temples, the colour of victims. All these things are duly regulated according to the custom of each country, and by dreams or prophecies or oracles the demons make their anger known, when through the carelessness or arrogance of men any detail has been neglected.[2] This is precisely the theory which we find in Celsus, but, like Julian

[1] Vol. ii. p. 993.

[2] Vol. ii. p. 997. "Unde etiam religionum diversis observationibus, et sacrorum variis suppliciis fides impertienda est. . . . Itidem pro regionibus et cætera in sacris differunt longa varietate. . . . Quæ omnia pro cujusque more loci solemnia et rata sunt."

after him, he emphasises a point which, if not so explicitly enunciated by former writers, was clearly involved in the hypothesis. This reverence in each country for its own forms of worship is to be traced back to a period when each country or city was assigned to the guardianship of a particular demon.[1] If Judaism were willing to take its place as one of many national religions, it might be tolerated; but for Christianity, which had a recent origin in a Jewish revolt, no place could be found in such a system. By its own admission and claims it stood condemned. It was not venerable because of its antiquity, and yet it dared to assert for itself absolute supremacy and exclusive authority. It was guilty of the unpardonable crime of innovation.[2] It was impiety to the overseers—to the demons who ruled over nations or cities—to abolish laws and customs that were coeval with the national existence and were the reflex of the character of their guardian deity, who administered his province in harmony with his own nature. Origen

[1] Celsus calls them *ἐπόπται*—v. 25; *σατράπαι καὶ διάκονοι*—viii. 35. Julian says that the Creator was the common Father and King of all, and that the nations were allotted by Him—*ἐθνάρχαις καὶ πολιούρχοις θεοῖς* (Cyril con. Jul., iv. 115 D.) Clement has a similar theory to that of Origen—Strom., vi. c. 17, s. 157. Julian's authority is clearly Plato, Polit., p. 271 D. God superintended the whole revolution of the universe—*καὶ κατὰ τόπους ταὐτὸν τοῦτο ὑπὸ θεῶν ἀρχόντων πάντ' ἦν τὰ τοῦ κόσμου μέρη διειλημμένα.* But that arrangement, Plato adds, belonged chiefly not to the present but to the previous cycle.

[2] Cf. Julian: *φεύγω τὴν καινοτομίαν . . . ἰδίᾳ δὲ ἐν τοῖς πρὸς τοὺς θεούς*—Epist. lxiii., p. 453 B.

has no difficulty in showing the radical weakness of this theory of national piety and ethics. All piety becomes conventional. It is right for the Scythians to murder their fathers, for the Indians to eat them. Incest as practised by the Persians is lawful and holy. Piety is not divine in its own nature, but only by some arbitrary arrangement or custom. On this principle divine sanction may be claimed for the most contradictory laws.[1] One nation eats what another adores. The same act is holy here, unholy there. And if there be no absolute standard of piety, there is equally no canon of morals: temperance, manliness, prudence, are only virtues relative and comparative.[2] This theory is powerless to mediate between conflicting views. Celsus admitted with scornful complaisance that on this basis Judaism as a national religion had equal claims to respect with others. By whom, then, were the parts of the earth first allotted? "Was it Zeus who allotted to some overseer or overseers the nation and country of the Jews? And were the laws that obtain among the Jews established with the consent of Zeus, or contrary to his will?"[3] And if it be right to hold by ancestral laws, is it right for the Jew to violate the law that forbade him to worship any other god than the Creator of the universe?[4]

The tenacity with which this conception of national overseers kept hold of the minds of men is illustrated

[1] v. 27, 36. [2] v. 28. [3] v. 26. [4] v. 27.

by its promulgation by Julian nearly two centuries later in almost the same words, partly from a polemical motive akin to that of Celsus, partly as an apology for Hellenism, and not less by the circumstance that Origen in refuting it was hampered by his belief in a theory which, on the face of it, differed very little from that of Celsus. He too believed in an allocation of the nations to overseers, but he differed from Celsus with respect to the principle, method, and consequences of this allocation: to suppose that the allocation was fortuitous or aimless is to insult the providence of God.[1] Though Origen acknowledges foregleams of his view in Greek and Egyptian traditions, he professes to base it on the authority of Scripture. He finds it in a passage of Deuteronomy which is thus rendered in the Septuagint: "When the Most High divided the nations, when He scattered the sons of Adam, He set the boundaries of the nations according to the number of the angels of God, and the Lord's portion was His people Jacob, Israel the cord of His inheritance."[2] Taking this passage along with the narrative of Babel in Genesis,[3] he builds up a fantastic superstructure. All men at first had one divine language, and dwelt "in the east" so long as they loved the light of God and His truth. Losing their love for

[1] v. 26. Julian makes the same remark—Cyril con. Julian., iv. 116 B.

[2] Deut. xxxii. 8, 9. ἔστησεν ὅρια ἐθνῶν κατὰ ἀριθμὸν ἀγγέλων θεοῦ.

[3] Gen. xi. 1, 2, 5-9.

the light, they removed from the east, their loss of divine nourishment being symbolised by their coming to "Shinar.[1] Hoping by means of material things to effect union with immaterial and attack the latter, they resolved to make brick into stone and clay into asphalt, and build a tower. In proportion to the degree of their departure from the east, and in proportion to the amount and height of their building (in proportion, perhaps, to the degree of their alienation from God and the substitution of material for spiritual means and aims), were they consigned for punishment to angels more or less severe. Each angel gave to his own portion his own language, and each portion was led according to its merits to different parts—one to a region of heat, another to a region of cold; one to poor soil, another to less poor.[2] Those who continued to abide in the east were the "portion of the Lord." Others received superintendents to punish them, but His portion did not. In their case, too, sin followed, and with it punishment proportionate to the measure of their sin. They were handed over to the powers to whom the other nations had been allotted; as sin increased and the former discipline failed, they were consigned to harsher rulers: healing and punishment alternated, until at last they were completely dispersed among the districts superintended by other rulers. He to whom were allotted those who had not sinned

[1] Interpreted by Origen as "gnashing of teeth." [2] v. 30.

at first is much more powerful than the others, and has authority to draw away their subjects to Himself, and give to them the true law and goal of life. Wherefore we cannot follow the law of those who are demonstrated to be inferior, but must obey the higher and diviner law of Jesus.[1]

Even when heavily fettered by adherence to this fanciful speculation, in which history and symbolism are strangely mingled, Origen did not forget what was due to the claims of liberty and progress. According to him, this distribution of the nations was not arbitrary nor accidental. There was no divine partiality in the choice of Israel as the "portion of the Lord": it was so chosen because of its fitness,—because it had continued to dwell in the light of God. Nor was there any partiality in the allotment of other nations: they received superintendents appropriate to themselves, because they chose to sin. Thus there was no interference with freedom. The superintendent was appointed because of the affinity between the nation and him; it received a ruler in harmony with its own character: whereas, on the Hellenic theory, the superintendent stamped his character on the particular nation, which was thus brought into harmony with him. The only point of contact between Origen and Celsus is, that Origen makes the angel give his own language to the several classes; and this, on his own

[1] v. 31, 32.

theory of language, must have carried with it a measure of interference with liberty. By the theory of Celsus, all national virtues and defects were alike crystallised, nations and men were endowed with a natural capacity or incapacity of thinking or doing the right, the perpetual isolation of nations and cities in matters of religion was ordered by divine appointment; progress or change was an anomaly and a crime. On the theory of Origen, there were no impassable barriers between men of different nationalities: it was possible for all—nay, it was the duty of all—to return to their allegiance to the one Superintendent, who alone could give an absolute and eternal law of life. It was not a mere question of names: in their relation to the sovereign God, in their relation to nations, in the extent of the powers conferred, and in the ends for which the powers were granted, the superintendents of Origen differed essentially from the national demons of Celsus. And hence in the subsequent development of the theory the seeming parallelism passed into pronounced antagonism.

The principle of intermediaries being once admitted, further development of it was natural and inevitable, for the process of specialisation of functions was capable of indefinite expansion. It was a vain illusion for the Christians to suppose, said Celsus, triumphantly, that by keeping away from idol-festivals they could avoid intercourse with demons; for the demons

were everywhere, superintending every relation of life, indissolubly associated with the commonest actions. Air, water, fruits, were under their control; every stage in birth and marriage had its separate demon; health and sickness, prosperity and adversity, were dependent on their goodwill. The Christians could only get rid of demons by leaving the world altogether. Such teaching as this enables us better to understand the attitude of hostility to the world which was inculcated by the early Christian writers: it shows why no compromise was possible,—why the world was regarded as essentially evil, and antagonistic to the true God. Polytheism might now be impotent as a religious and moral force, but in the social and family life it was still an omnipresent factor.

The fundamental difference between Celsus and Origen on the question of demons lies in the representation of the relation in which the demons stand towards God. According to Celsus, they are servants of God, and as such worthy of grateful homage: they can do good and harm to men, and therefore ought to be propitiated. Demons, says Origen, are not the servants of God.[1] There are good angels and bad angels, good men and bad men, but all demons are bad.[2] It is true that there are invisible husbandmen and administrators who attend to the fruits of the earth, to springs and rivers, and who keep the air

[1] viii. 13. [2] viii. 25.

pure and life-giving. But this is the work not of demons but of angels, who neither deserve nor desire the homage which is due only to God. The demons, on the contrary, are the source of famine, barrenness, drought, and the corruption of the air that destroys fruit and animals, and creates pestilence. They discharge the functions of public executioners, receiving by the will of God power to carry out such work with a view to the warning and discipline of mankind.[1] Whether, in fulfilling this task, the demons have any power to initiate disciplinary procedure, Origen does not explicitly say. He speaks of the subject as a large one, and difficult for human nature to grasp, and of greater speculative subtlety than Celsus supposed.[2] His own criticism on the theory of Celsus loses much of its force if he acknowledged that the demons had power to go beyond their commission. Sometimes he says, in harmony with the theory previously propounded by him, that the Word who administers the whole appointed the demons to rule over those who subject themselves to wickedness and not to God, and compares their work to that of State officials appointed to execute sinister but necessary duties;[3] sometimes he suggests that, like bands of brigands, they appoint a leader to steal and rob the souls of men, and that in a lawless spirit they sought places where the knowledge of God and a divinely

[1] viii. 57, 31. [2] viii. 7; vii. 67; viii. 32. [3] viii. 33.

ordered life was banished, and where many were hostile to God.[1] But on two points he never wavers —that there was no interference with human liberty, inasmuch as the demons, whether appointed by God or self-appointed, were allotted to those who had already sinned; and that demons were powerless to injure those who had God on their side. To pay homage to them would be to show ingratitude to God, and was, moreover, superfluous. "For as the movement of the shadow follows the movement of the body, to secure the favour of the God over all is to secure the favour of all His friends and servants."[2] The demons were not demons at first, but became so by falling away from the path that leads to good; but their habits and tastes now prove their essential badness.[3] Their sole desire is to feed on blood, incense, and smoke: this, and not virtue, gains their favour.[4] To propitiate them is really impossible.[5] It is not certain that they can do any good to the bodies of men. Better for the majority of men to trust to medical science; the few may find a better remedy in piety and prayer to God.[6] For God has universal power, and can take action for the wellbeing of men, whether as regards the soul or the body. There is no guarantee that the demons will keep their faith to those who offer sacrifice to them, but rather the likelihood is that they will be bribed

[1] vii. 70. [2] viii. 64. [3] vii. 69.
[4] vii. 6, 35. [5] viii. 26. [6] viii. 60.

by richer offerings to attack the man who but yesterday paid them homage.[1] And even if bodily health and temporal prosperity were to be secured by such service, rather would we choose sickness and adversity along with a pure conscience towards the sovereign God, than health and prosperity along with a sick and unprosperous soul.[2] As the demons can do no good, neither can they do harm. God can give His servants power to ward off their assaults.[3] He has put them in charge of divine angels who themselves pray to God, and, recognising the pious as kindred, co-operate with them in prayer and service.[4] If the demons could do harm, they would be unworthy of homage. The conversion and reformation of the people should be the aim of rulers; and if the demonic satraps of Celsus did seek to injure men, they would be inferior to Lycurgus or Zeno.[5] But they can do no injury; they can be driven out without any magical formulas or incantations; they are so contemptibly impotent that even the ignorant can expel them by prayer and some simple adjuration.[6] Because of being thus driven out from statues and the souls and bodies of men, the demons are eager to avenge themselves on the Christians.[7] They opposed the teaching of Christ, because their loved libations and odours were taken away by its victorious advance.[8] The souls of martyrs

[1] viii. 61. [2] viii. 62. [3] viii. 58. [4] viii. 27, 34, 36.
[5] viii. 35. [6] vii. 4. [7] viii. 43. [8] iii. 29.

destroy their power and weaken their attack—hence the present cessation of persecution; "and until the demons have forgotten their sufferings and toil, there will probably be peace between the world and Christians. But when they regather their forces, and in blind malice again persecute the Christians, they will again be destroyed by the spirits of the pious martyrs." This consciousness of their power being undermined is seen when Christians are on their trial: they show that they are eager partisans, for to them the confession of Christianity is a torture, and denial a relief. The exultant bearing of the judges, when any Christian succumbs and recants, points in the same direction. And yet, after all, "though the tongue give way to torture, the mind is not forsworn."[1] Holding these views respecting the nature and office of demons, the Christians cannot pray to them. "We must pray to the one sovereign God, and to the 'Only-begotten and First-born of every creature,' the Word of God, and ask Him as High Priest to present our prayers to His God and our God, to His Father and the Father of all that live according to the Word of God."[2] Nor can the Christians take part in idol-festivals.[3] Origen on this point quotes the arguments of St Paul, and shows that such participation was not consistent with loyalty to the one God. These feasts did not owe their

[1] viii. 44. Cf. Eurip. Hipp., 612.
[2] viii. 26. [3] vii. 24.

origin to a true theory concerning God, but were invented by the men who instituted them from time to time. Some were founded on events in the histories of men; some on the explanation of the natural phenomena of water, earth, and the fruits thereof. (For the moment Origen thus seems to give his adherence to the interpretations of mythology suggested respectively by Euhemerus and Varro.) And in either case, participation in an idol-festival by an intelligent worshipper of the Godhead is unreasonable. Moreover, as one of the wise Greeks has well said, a feast is "nothing else than to do one's duty"; and he truly keeps festival who prays always, offering up continually bloodless sacrifices to God.[1]

"Why, then, do you keep the Lord's Day, or the Preparation, or the Paschal Feast, or the Pentecost?" These appointed days are a mere concession to the imperfect spiritual nature. The perfect man, who is always in everything devoted to the God-Word, his natural Lord, is always keeping the Lord's Day. He who does not "feed the will of the flesh," but "keeps his body under," is always keeping the Preparation day. He who perceives that Christ the Passover was crucified for us, and eats the flesh of the Word, is always keeping the Paschal Feast, for he is "passing over" in every word and thought from the affairs of life unto God. He who "has risen together with

[1] viii. 21.

Christ" is always keeping the day of Pentecost, especially when in the "upper chamber" he becomes worthy of the "rushing mighty wind" which can utterly sweep away the evil in men.[1] The majority of men cannot or will not keep all days in such wise, and require to be reminded by sensible symbols of those spiritual conceptions which otherwise would altogether slip from their grasp.[2] Eternal life, according to the divine Word, lies not "in part of a feast,"[3] but in a complete and incessant feast."[4]

III. As a secret and mysterious association, Christianity, according to Celsus, had a distinctive symbol—the absence or avoidance of altars, temples, and statues. In this respect it agreed with the most barbarous races. This novel feature must have aroused the suspicion of the State, and weakened the force of the Christian plea for toleration. Having no altars nor temples, had Christianity any right to be considered a religion at all?

The Christian can pray in every place, for to him the whole cosmos is a temple of God.[5] Our avoidance of temples is not the same as that of the Scythians, for it springs from a different principle, which gives

[1] viii. 22.

[2] *ἀισθητῶν παραδειγμάτων· ἵνα μὴ τέλεον παραβρυῇ*—viii. 23.

[3] Origen, like Chrysostom, thus interprets Col. ii. 16—*ἐν μέρει ἑορτῆς*.

[4] viii. 23.

[5] vii. 44.

to the act a different character. By the motive that governs the abstinence must it be determined in any case whether praise or censure is to be awarded.[1] The Scythian does not refrain from such from any fear that he will degrade the worship of God, or from any right conception regarding the nature and habits of demons. But the Christians and the Jews do so in obedience to the divine commandments,[2] and hence they will rather die than by such a lawless act defile their conception of the Supreme God.[3] The Persians avoid altars, but they worship the sun and other works of God: this we are forbidden to do.[4]

We have altars, statues, and temples of our own. "The soul of every just man is an altar. From it rise the prayers of a pure conscience—a sweet-smelling incense, spiritually and in very truth." Our statues are not made by worthless artisans, but are fashioned in us by the Word of God. These statues are the virtues which are imitations of the First-born of every creature, "in whom are the ideals of all the virtues."[5] With such statues He who is the prototype of all statues—the only-begotten God—may fitly be honoured. And just as there is great difference in the fashioning of images and statues, as some are wonderfully perfect, like the statues of Phidias and Poly-

[1] vii. 63. [2] Deut. vi. 13; Ex. xx. 3-5. [3] vii. 64. [4] vii. 65.
[5] ἐν ᾧ ἐστι δικαιοσύνης . . . καὶ τῶν λοιπῶν ἀρετῶν παραδείγματα—viii. 17.

cleitus, so is it with the making of spiritual statues. Some are wrought with such perfect skill that there is no comparison between them and the Olympian Zeus of Phidias; but surpassing all in the whole creation is the image in the Saviour, who said, "The Father in me."[1] And any one who imitates Him according to his power is raising a statue after the image of the Creator, becoming an imitator of God by looking upon Him with a pure heart. These altars and temples are for the reception of the spirit of God, who dwells in those akin to Himself. Compare our altars with others, and our statues with those of Phidias, and you will see that these are lifeless and corrupted by time, while those abide in the immortal soul.[2] So is it with temples. We have been taught that our bodies are the temple of God which it is impious to corrupt, and do not, therefore, build "soulless and dead temples to the bountiful supplier of all life." Of all temples the best and most excellent was the pure and holy body of our Saviour. And every true follower of His is a precious stone in the universal temple of God.[3] Our temples are alone worthy of the divine majesty. It is not, then, as the distinctive mark of a secret society that we shrink from building temples, but because through Jesus, who is the only way of piety, we have learned the true form of serving God.[4]

[1] viii. 17. Cf. John xiv. 10. [2] viii. 18. [3] viii. 19. [4] viii. 20.

CHAPTER VII.

COUNTER-ATTACK ON HELLENIC PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGION.

Hellenic culture found in Origen a sympathetic critic and interpreter. In this respect he was a true disciple of Clement, who assigned to Greek philosophy a divine function in the education of the world. What the law was to the Hebrews, a tutor to bring them to Christ, that philosophy was to the Greeks.[1] It was to them a covenant,[2] a preparatory training for the truth.[3] It is of God, for understanding is the gift of God.[4] It is a fragment of the one eternal truth, from the theology of the ever-existent Word.[5] God's peculiar relation to the people of Israel does not exclude His relationship to other peoples.[6] Into all men absolutely, but specially into those who are devoted to philosophy, a divine emanation has been instilled.[7] Since the coming of the Word, philosophy is sup-

[1] Strom., i. c. 5, s. 28 (Dindorf).
[2] Idem, vi. c. 8, s. 67.
[3] Idem, s. 62.
[4] Idem, s. 63.
[5] Idem, i. c. 13, s. 57.
[6] Idem, vi. c. 8, s. 63. Cf. Psalm cxlvii. 20.
[7] Cohort., c. 6, s. 68.

planted by Christianity, so that it is no longer necessary to go to Athens for human learning.[1] Philosophy serves the purpose of sauce and dessert: the truth which is according to faith is necessary to life, like bread.[2] Yet philosophy may still, like a flight of steps, help men into the "upper room"; it may, too, be a buttress to Christianity, as the "fence and wall of the vineyard" against sophistical attacks.[3] These conceptions of Clement bore fruit in the mind of Origen. They both stand in this respect in striking contrast with Tertullian. To him there was and could be nothing in common "between Athens and Jerusalem, the Academy and the Church"[4] One illustration will set forth their varied mental attitude. Clement, Tertullian, and Origen agree in ascribing the origin of heresies to Greek philosophy, but their view of this relation differs widely. In the eyes of Tertullian philosophy is the source and instigator of all heresies, and as such stands self-condemned.[5] Clement admits that Marcion found in Plato the pretext for his foreign doctrines, but holds that in so doing he acted in a thankless and ignorant way.[6] According to Origen, heresy was the natural result,

[1] Cohort., c. 11, s. 112.

[2] Strom., i. c. 20, s. 100. Cf. vi. c. 18, s. 162.

[3] Strom., i. c. 20, s. 100. [4] De Præsc. Adv. Hæret., 7.

[5] "Hæreses a philosophia subornantur."—Idem.

[6] Strom., iii. c. 3, s. 21. Tertullian ascribes the doctrine of Marcion to the Stoics.

at least in the preliminary stages, of applying philosophical forms and methods to the study of Christianity; but to him philosophy was not on this account evil, as the study of the different heretical theories was an intellectual discipline essential to a higher grasp of Christian truth.[1]

I. In the judgment of Origen, not only was there no necessary antagonism between Christianity and Hellenic philosophy, but reconciliation and co-operation between them, so far as possible, was a duty.[2] The reconciliation which he desiderates is a reconciliation in the sphere of ethics rather than in that of metaphysics. Co-operation is possible, for they have many dogmas in common.[3] With sound philosophical opinions Christianity has no controversy.[4] This policy of conciliation is commended by philanthropic considerations. When men from prejudice refuse to listen to Christian teachers, or to accept the Christian system in its entirety, it is right to enforce those common doctrines which tend to produce a healthy life, and to appeal to the indestructible instinct of right and wrong.[5] What philosophy was historically —a preliminary discipline for Christianity—that it may still be to the individual adherent.[6] So it may be the handmaid of the Gospel; for one who has been

[1] iii. 13 [2] iv. 83. [3] iii. 81; iv. 81, 74.
[4] vii. 49. [5] viii. 52. [6] iii. 58.

trained in the views and schools of the Greeks will confirm Christian truths with all the resources of Greek dialectic.[1] Such is Origen's general position; but in seeking to refute one who exalted philosophy at the expense of Christian teaching, he found it necessary to maintain the pre-eminence of Christianity by showing that in no respect was philosophy superior, and that in many respects it was inferior as a moral force and discipline.

All the charges brought by Celsus against Christ in respect of His teaching or of His dealings with the disciples may be answered by bringing forward parallel cases from the history or teaching of the Greek thinkers. Is it to be a ground of accusation against Jesus that He was betrayed by a disciple? Did not Chrysippus attack his tutor Cleanthes? What of Aristotle, who was for twenty years a disciple of Plato, and yet called his "ideas" mere chattering? Did Plato cease to be powerful in argument when Aristotle seceded from him? Did the secession argue the falsehood of the Platonic doctrines, or ingratitude on the part of Aristotle? He attended for twenty years the lectures of Plato; Judas was not three years with Jesus.[2] It is false that Jesus wandered up and down, skulking from fear; but had He done so, did not Aristotle go from Athens to Chalcis, lest the Athenians should a second time show impiety

[1] i. 2. [2] ii. 12.

towards philosophy?[1] Did Jesus talk marvels? So did Plato. Aristander ascribes to him a miraculous birth. What of the third eye of Plato, or the golden thigh of Pythagoras?[2] You condemn the Word for its heresies. It is the same with philosophy.[3] From the teaching of Socrates many schools arose.[4] Is Jesus to be despised because He was not free from poverty and suffering? Many of the Greek philosophers were poor,—witness Democritus and Diogenes.[5] We are condemned as apostates from the national religion. If philosophers who have risen above superstition may refuse compliance with some form of religious abstinence, why may not we do what is analogous without censure?[6] These passages may more than suffice for illustration of the manner in which Origen met the flimsier cavils of Celsus. Though it well served his immediate object, this method of discussion was of no permanent value, and in some parts was prejudicial to his own cause.

Following out a similar method of argument, Origen retorts against Celsus some of the charges which he had brought against Christianity. His accusations have no validity against Christian teachers and their dogmas, but are true of many philosophers and their speculations. The Christians are not "babblers" or "senseless," nor do they utter "old wives' fables," nor

[1] i. 65. [2] vi. 8. Cf. v. 57. [3] ii. 17.
[4] iii. 13. [5] ii. 41. [6] v. 37.

are they to be likened to "worms or ants rolling in a dunghill"; but of some philosophers these scornful sayings may with truth be spoken. Are not they really "senseless babblers" who drive the young into moral disorders, and incite women to superstition, and not we who induce them to abandon philosophical dogmas for the piety which we cultivate, by commending its excellence and genuine purity?[1] Men not to be despised for speculative power have propounded opinions which might fittingly be described as "old wives' fables." What more ridiculous than the Stoic theory of the recurrence of cycles and events?[2] Tested by their moral character, the effects of their teaching, and their ignorance of God, many of them may truly be compared to "worms rolling in the corner of a dunghill."[3] The rashness with which some philosophers pronounce on the creation of the universe and kindred problems, on the nature of souls in relation to God and their connection with bodies, as if, forgetful of the limited measure of their capacities, they had fully grasped the question, might tempt one who was inclined to scoff to repeat this taunt of Celsus.[4] The "inspired poets and philosophers" to whom he directs us are blind guides in regard to the truth, and their followers must stumble. If not entirely blind, they are at least blind in respect of many dogmas. Does he allude to Orpheus, or Parmenides, or Homer, or

[1] iii. 57. [2] v. 20. [3] iv. 25. [4] iv. 30.

Hesiod? Which will walk with greater steadfastness and learn what is useful to life? Those who accept such guides, or those who, by following the teaching of Jesus, have left behind all images and statues, and all Judaic superstition, and look up through the Word of God to God only, the Father of the Word?[1] From such so-called "skilled physicians" we do keep away men. When there is implanted in the mind a belief which seeks to take away Providence, and to introduce pleasure as a good, it is a serious disease, and when we seek to extirpate it, we act in harmony with the highest reason. In like manner, by inspiring men with a devotion to the God over all, we aim at curing the grievous wounds induced by certain doctrines of the Peripatetics and the Stoics.[2] The inferiority of philosophers is attested by the limitation of their gifts. They were only men, and had nothing but the nature of men; the exposition of their principles was attended by results very different from those which attended the preaching of the first ambassadors of the Word.[3]

Putting aside much that is of little interest, unless by way of illustrating the idiosyncrasies of the apologist,[4] we may note two points which emphasise the

[1] vii. 41. [2] iii. 75. Cf. iv. 27. [3] iii. 68.

[4] See, *e.g.*, vi. 6, where he argues that Plato was inferior to Jesus, and also to St John (in the Apocalypse), because Plato wrote and could write all that he knew, while it was impossible for them to do so; or vi. 41, where he maintains against Celsus that magic had power over philosophers, and quotes illustrations from Moiragenes's Life of Apollonius of Tyana.

contrast between the philosophic and the Christian ideal of teaching and life. Philosophy is lacking in philanthropy. This was the most prominent characteristic of the Word. By this principle the form and method of revelation were determined. Philosophy, as represented by Celsus, refused to hold intercourse with the rustic and impure, as if they belonged to a different order of beings. But the barriers which separate us from the irrational creatures do not separate us from the ruder of mankind; for all men have been formed by God on a common level, with the capacity of holding fellowship with each other. It is right, therefore, to lead the rude as far as possible to refinement, to make the impure pure, to convert those who cherish irrational and unhealthy sentiments to rational action and healthiness of soul.[1] In respect of love of mankind, even the nobler sayings of Plato fall short of the divine Word. The Word became flesh that God might be accessible to all men. If Plato or any other of the Greeks had truly found God, he would not have reverenced anything else, and called it God, and worshipped it.[2] Philosophers, again, are inconsistent. After all their lofty discourses, they look upon images and pray to them, or at least fancy that by that which is seen they can rise in thought to that of which it is supposed to be a symbol.[3] To the Christian, things that are seen and temporal serve

[1] viii. 50. [2] vii. 42. [3] vii. 44, 47.

as stepping-stones for the apprehension of that which transcends the senses, but he needs no image for that end. If philosophers pretend to pray to images as a mere concession to the prejudices of the multitude, their folly is not the less; accommodation of this sort is not consistent with true piety towards God; in the soul of one truly pious nothing spurious should dwell.[1] Thus the Christian could not be false to his belief in God by giving an apparent homage to images of gods; with him such a compromise was impossible. In this lay the fundamental distinction between a theism which was purely speculative in origin, and that Christian monotheism which was dominated by a religious impulse.

II. In regard to polytheism, Origen takes higher ground than most of the Christian apologists. With that almost savage gloating over the immoralities of heathen worship which so conspicuously disfigures the attack of Arnobius he had little sympathy. Dealing not so much with paganism itself as with a philosophical defence of it, he strikes at the root, not at the putrid branches.

The order that reigns in the universe is irreconcilable with any system of polytheism. The universe,

[1] οὐδὲν γὰρ νόθον χρὴ ἐνυπάρχειν τῇ ψυχῇ τοῦ ἀληθῶς εἰς τὸ θεῖον εὐσεβοῦς—vii. 66. Cf. Seneca (vol. iii. p. 426, edit. Haase). He did as a citizen what he disclaimed as a philosopher.

as a unity in absolute harmony with itself, must have derived its origin from one Creator.[1] To give coherence and symmetry of movement to the whole heaven requires not the impulse of many souls,—one soul suffices. No part of the cosmos is absolutely independent,—all things are parts of a cosmos; but God is no part of the whole. For God cannot be imperfect as a part is imperfect. And as He is not, properly speaking, a part, so neither is He the whole, as a whole consists of parts. It is contrary to reason to conceive of the God over all as consisting of parts, each of which has not the same potency as the other parts.[2] The natural conception of God is that of One absolutely incorruptible, simple, non-composite, and indivisible.[3] By these characteristics He is clearly marked off not only from the gods of the Epicureans, but from the God of the Stoics. The Stoics represent God as a Spirit who penetrates everything, and embraces everything in Himself. "We teach that Providence does contain and embrace all its objects, not as a body contains that which is itself a body, but as a divine power embracing things contained. According to the doctrine of the Stoics — who hold that

[1] *κατὰ τὴν εὐταξίαν τοῦ κόσμου σέβειν τὸν δημιουργὸν αὐτοῦ, ἑνὸς ὄντος ἕνα, καὶ συμπνέοντος αὐτοῦ ὅλῳ ἑαυτῷ*—i. 23.

[2] *καὶ οὐκ ἐρεῖ λόγος παραδέξασθαι τὸν ἐπὶ πᾶσι θεὸν εἶναι ἐκ μερῶν, ὧν ἕκαστον οὐ δύναται ὅπερ τὰ ἄλλα μέρη*—Idem.

[3] *τὴν φυσικὴν τοῦ θεοῦ ἔννοιαν ὡς πάντῃ ἀφθάρτου καὶ ἁπλοῦ καὶ ἀσυνθέτου καὶ ἀδιαιρέτου*—iv. 14.

principles are corporeal, and thus make all things corruptible, and in this way (were it not for the manifest incongruity) run the risk of making the God over all corruptible — the Word of God who condescends to men, even the least, is no other than a corporeal spirit. But according to us—who hold that the rational soul is superior to all corporeal nature, and invisible and immaterial in its essence—God the Word, by whom all things were made, who appeared that not man alone but the least of the things administered by nature might be formed through reason, could not possibly be a body."[1] The world, then, is a reality distinct and separate from God, "not only logically, but substantially: it is not a mode of His substance."[2] God administers the universe without interfering with the free-will of man. The universe does not move in one recurrent cycle, but is always moving towards higher perfection, according to the capacity of each free-will. For free-will in man admits that which is contingent, and cannot attain to the absolute immutability of God.[3] Man is thus free to forward or to thwart the progress of the world, to worship God or to defy Him.

Only in an infinite Creator can the spirit of man find satisfaction. Man ought not to worship anything, however beautiful, but ascend from the beauty of the cosmos to Him who made the universe. None but He

[1] vi. 71. [2] Denis, La Philosophie d'Origène, p. 151. [3] v. 21.

can satisfy all things that are, see into the thoughts of all, and hear the prayers of all. To such a one we can intrust ourselves, but not to one whose power is limited.[1] He who cannot satisfy the whole cannot truly satisfy any part.

As the Creator of the universe, God cannot admit a divided homage. We cannot worship anything along with Him.[2] We cannot worship anything that He has made, or that is made by man. Man may begin with sensible things, but cannot abide in them.[3] We dare not worship even the noblest of things created—the sun, moon, and stars. It would be unreasonable for those who had obtained the brightness of the Eternal Light to prostrate themselves in admiration and obeisance before a merely sensible light.[4] Not even if the stars are rational and moral beings, and endowed with free-will, can we worship them; for they, like ourselves, only participate in the true Light. The worshippers of the heavens would never dream of worshipping a spark of fire or a lamp; and in like manner those who believe that God is Light, and that the Son of God is "the Light that lighteneth every man that cometh into the world," will never worship what is intellectually only a brief spark. We cannot worship those who themselves give worship, and who do not wish to share with God our "power of prayer."[5] Divested of

[1] iv. 26. [2] iii. 77. [3] vii. 37.
[4] v. 10. [5] *τὴν εὐκτικὴν δύναμιν*—v. 11, 12.

its peculiar phraseology, the thought of Origen may be thus interpreted. A spiritual being like man cannot worship anything material, however vast and magnificent. He who has been taught to know the Most High God cannot worship any created being, however lofty, whose life, like his own, is derived from God and not self-originated. Worship cannot be accorded to that which itself worships a Higher, but only to one whose supremacy is absolute and universal. With the possibility presented by Christianity of immediate fellowship between God and the spirit of man, the basis for even the purest form of polytheism disappears. This does not involve any disrespect or dishonour to the works of God, but only emphasises His ineffable excellence.[1] If the worship of the heavens be thus unreasonable, the worship of anything formed by the hands of man is the veriest blindness. No work of mechanics can be holy, or give sacredness to any place.[2] No image can represent the form of God, who is invisible and incorporeal.[3]

If the existence of a supreme God be admitted, by what name should He be invoked? Celsus had said that this was a matter of indifference—that the Adonai of the Hebrews, the Zeus of the Greeks, the Ammon of the Egyptians, the Pappæus of the Scythians, were only different names for the one sovereign God. Origen maintains the opposite partly on moral, mainly on

[1] v. 13. [2] vii. 52; vi. 66. [3] vii. 66.

mystical grounds. The Christian cannot call the name of the "God over all" Zeus, but will die rather than do so, because that name is associated in the minds of men with shameful deeds. And for a similar reason he will not dishonour the fair works of God, even in name, by speaking of the sun as Apollo or of the moon as Artemis.[1] When we use the Greek common name for God, we add some phrase such as "the Maker of heaven and earth," or "the Creator of the universe," or "who sent wise men to the human race."[2] The mystical argument to which he attached most weight is derived from his theory of the nature of names. Names are not conventional nor arbitrary signs. From the power of particular names in exorcism and magical incantations, especially from the fact that the name powerful in one language loses its force when translated, it is manifest that the power is inherent in the qualities and peculiar properties of the sounds, not in the things signified.[3] Say "the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob," and the demons are overcome; say "the God of the chosen father of the echo, the God of laughter, the God of the supplanter," and the virtue is gone.[4] The names Sabaoth and Adonai are not related to things created and accidental, but belong to a sacred theology which is to be traced back to the Creator of the universe.[5] From their knowledge of the mysterious power and nature

[1] iv. 48. [2] i. 25. [3] i. 24, 25. [4] v. 45. [5] i. 24.

of names, Moses and the prophets forbade the people, who were anxious to serve the only supreme God, to name the names of other gods. Zeus is not the same as Sabaoth, nor is he in any respect divine; but a certain demon not friendly to men or the true God has assumed that name. No threatenings will induce us to call Ammon God, as he is but a demon invoked by the Egyptians under that name. In like manner Pappæus is only the name of a demon to whom were allotted the desert, the nation, and the language of the Scythians. Yet it is no sin for any one to call God by His name "appellative" in the Scythian or other language in which he may have been nurtured.[1] In praying to God, it is not necessary to use the proper names which are employed in Scripture to designate God. The Greeks use Greek names and the Romans use Roman names. Each prays to God in his own language and praises Him as he can; and He, who is the Lord of every language, hears those who pray in every language, hearing, as it were, but one voice from the various languages.[2]

III. In place of this all-sovereign God, what had polytheism to offer? Beings whose existence had to be demonstrated—beings in all respects worthless—at best only demons.[3]

While compelled by the polemic of Celsus to attack

[1] v. 46. [2] viii. 37. [3] i. 25; viii. 11, 59.

the details of polytheism as one method of testing its principles, Origen disclaims all sympathy with that fanatical reviling of images which Celsus had marked in some of the adherents of Christianity. Abuse of any kind, even when naturally evoked by injustice, is foreign to the spirit of the Gospel: to abuse lifeless images were sheer silliness.[1] It was, moreover, useless for the purpose of destroying the judgments of men in regard to their gods. Men who deny the existence of God and providence suffer no evil, or what at least is commonly regarded as evil, but, on the contrary, enjoy health and worldly prosperity. True evil, moral loss and deterioration, they do suffer. Can any injury be greater than not to perceive from the order of the world Him who formed it? Can any misery be greater than to be blinded in intelligence, and not to see the Creator and Father of every intelligence?[2]

The gods worshipped among the Greeks are condemned by the testimony of their own writers. The men for whom Celsus claimed inspiration ascribed to the gods generation and countless absurdities; and with good reason Plato expelled such from his commonwealth on the ground that they corrupted youth.[3] The fabled miracles were rejected as myths by the Greek philosophers; but had they fallen in with Moses or Jesus Himself, they might have acknowledged the cogency of the evidence for our miracles.[4]

[1] viii. 41. [2] viii. 37. [3] iv. 36; i. 17; iii. 43. [4] viii. 45.

The gods were dissolute in character. Recall the licentious record of Heracles and his effeminate slavery with Omphale.[1] Is there anything worthy of divine honour in his stealing the ox of the husbandman, and enjoying his curses?[2] Is there anything to command our homage in the madman Dionysus with his feminine garments?[3] Or in the legends of his deception by the Titans, his falling from the throne of Zeus, his being torn in pieces, and being put together again?[4] If a healing demon resided in Asclepius, what does it prove? The power to heal is in itself a thing indifferent,[5] and his divinity must be attested—which it cannot be—by his goodness, by the nature of the cures wrought, and by the character of the persons cured.[6] When Celsus attributed to such gods a desire to punish those who insulted them, he virtually acknowledged that they were worthless. It is unworthy of a god to punish men from a vindictive spirit, and not with a view to their moral improvement.[7]

A like want of moral sense and moral fitness is conspicuous in Apollo and his oracles. The oracle ascribed divine honours to Cleomedes the boxer; by ignoring Pythagoras and Socrates it refused to philosophy what it gave to pugilism. Archilochus prostituted his poetic art to licentious themes; yet it called

[1] iii. 22. [2] vii. 54. [3] iii. 23. [4] iv. 17.
[5] *μέσον ἐστὶν ἡ τῶν σωμάτων ἰατρικὴ*—iii. 25.
iii. [7] viii. 42.

him pious because he was the servant of the Muses, who were thought to be goddesses! If to be pious means to be possessed of moderation and virtue, Archilochus had no claim to the name.[1] The oracles were assailed by Aristotle and the Peripatetics, as well as by Epicurus and his school. Even if it be granted that they were not fictions devised by men who only pretended to be inspired, they are not to be attributed to any deity but to some demons hostile to men, whose aim it is to prevent men from returning to true piety. The impious and profane character of the spirit is disclosed by the manner in which it is represented as entering into the Pythian prophetess.[2] So with the method of inspiration. The prophetess is deranged and loses self-consciousness when giving forth oracles: can that spirit be other than a demon which pours darkness over the understanding?[3] The Pythian priestess, too, could be bribed.[4] If Apollo were a god, why did he not choose a wise man for his instrument rather than a prophetess? If no wise man could be found, why not one who was progressing in wisdom? Why not a man rather than a woman?[5] If he preferred the female sex, why not choose a virgin or a woman of philosophic culture rather than a common woman? Were men of a better type too good to receive the inspiration of his energy? Had he been a god, he would have employed his foreknow-

[1] iii. 25. [2] vii. 3. Cf. iii. 25. [3] vii. 4. [4] viii. 46. [5] vii. 5.

ledge as a bait for the conversion and moral reformation of men; but this is not supported by the historic traditions concerning him.[1] The oracle, it is true, called Socrates the wisest of men; but it blunted the edge of that eulogy by its comparison: "Wise is Sophocles, but wiser is Euripides; but wiser than all is Socrates." His wisdom, then, is compared with those who contend on the stage for an ordinary prize, and create in the beholders now tears and pity, now unseemly laughter; for the satyric drama has no other aim. To Origen, who had no sense of humour, as the only jest in his apology shows,[2] and no sympathy with art for its own sake, the absence of a directly didactic element in the drama was a fatal flaw. Might it not, then, be that the oracle declared Socrates to be worthy of reverence not solely because of his philosophy and his grasp of truth? Might it not be that the victims which he offered had something to do with their judgment?[3]

The allegorical interpretation of Greek and Egyptian mythology does not meet with so much sympathy from Origen as we might have expected from his own love of that method. He condemns it as defective from the standpoint both of ethics and religion. The allegorical explanations must be ex-

[1] Ἔδει δὲ καὶ εἴπερ θεὸς ἦν, τῇ προγνώσει αὐτὸν χρήσασθαι δελέατι . . . πρὸς τὴν ἐπιστροφὴν καὶ θεραπείαν.—vii. 6.

[2] v. 55.

[3] vii. 6.

amined individually, to see if they contain anything that is wholesome.[1] Though Osiris be interpreted as water and Isis as land, we are enjoined by the allegory to reverence water, which is lifeless, and land, which is the servant of man and all animals.[2] Even if the monstrous stories of the Greek gods are explained in such fashion, they ought to evoke at once a feeling of shame. Take the explanation given by Chrysippus of Soli of the picture of Zeus and Hera at Samos. It is said to be a representation of matter receiving from God the spermatic principles for the adornment of the universe. Allegorise such stories as you will, you cannot prevent them from doing injury to youth.[3]

Polytheism had its festivals, its forbidden meats, its theory of future rewards and punishments. But the Christian festivals are far more venerable; for in the others the "mind of the flesh" keeps festival and runs riot, turning to drunkenness and licentiousness.[4] Their abstinence is not based on any rational principle. Had Ammon, for example, enjoined abstinence from the flesh of cows because of their service in agriculture, there would have been plausible ground for the prohibition. But to spare crocodiles, and regard them as sacred to some mythical god or another, is the height of folly. For it is sheer madness to spare animals which do not spare us, and be

[1] iii. 23. [2] v. 38. [3] iv. 48. [4] viii. 23.

concerned for animals which feast on man.[1] Our conception of punishment is in no way akin to that set forth "by phantoms and terrors in the Bacchic mysteries." Punishment in our case is a means of reformation: we believe it to be necessary for the good of the whole world, and perhaps of advantage to those who suffer it.[2]

[1] v. 36, 39.

[2] εἴτε διὰ τῶν περὶ κολάσεων ἀπειλῶν, ἃς πεπείσμεθα ἀναγκαίας εἶναι τῷ παντί, τάχα δε καὶ τοῖς πεισομένοις αὐτὰς οὐκ ἀχρήστους—iv. 10. Cf. iv. 69; v. 16; viii. 72.

CHAPTER VIII.

CONCLUSION.

In the modern sense of the term the apology of Origen is the first apology for Christianity. Up to this period the scientific demonstration of the truth of Christianity had only been an accessory, not a principal aim. The great object of the apologists had been to check persecution by showing its unreasonableness: they sought rather to establish the innocence of Christians in relation to the State than to prove the truth of Christianity; to protest against the persecution of the truth rather than to ward off intellectual assaults upon it. The first attack on Christianity as a religion came naturally from the Jews. Hence in all the earlier apologies we find two main lines of defence. Charged with nonconformity to the rites of the national religion, they defend their attitude by an exposition and criticism of the errors and insufficiency of heathenism: accused at once of their connection with the Jews and of their secession from them, they

attach almost exclusive importance to the function of prophecy, seeking by means of it to establish, in opposition to their heathen assailants, the divinity of Judaism, and to maintain against the Jews the fulfilment of their Messianic hopes in the person of Jesus. The foundations of a higher apology were laid when the Church was compelled by the intellectual unrest within to examine its treasures and test its credentials. But such movements within the Church sprang rather from an attempt to define the truth than from hostility towards it: they were not attacks from without, but rival plans of building up the citadel from within. Apologetics proper could not exist till Christianity itself, and not Christians merely, had been put upon trial before a competent tribunal. As an attack not on the outworks but on the very foundations of the Christian faith, the 'True Word' of Celsus created the possibility and the necessity of a scientific apology.

Probably no apology could have been more effective for the purpose and for the age for which it was written than the apology of Origen. The detailed character of the reply, though it interfered with the logical order and symmetry of the defence, might the more convincingly reassure the minds of the perplexed. But it has more than once happened that the most successful defence has by its very success become obsolete: dealing with a passing mode of thought, it has died with the disappearance of that mode; and we

sometimes forget that the fighting was none the less real although the armour has long ago become antiquated. In Origen there are such temporary elements, arising in part from the common beliefs of his age, in part from his idiosyncrasies. The latter are of no value except historically; the former may contain principles capable of modern application and restatement: a great writer is often fruitful and suggestive, even when his theories are fanciful and erroneous. To expect from Origen a full and adequate solution of modern problems would be a grotesque anachronism. His view of the magical power inherent in particular names and formulas, the prominence which he gives to the theory of demons, with the conceptions of the universe which that involved, the analogies which he found in the sphere of natural history to the supernatural birth of Jesus,[1] remind us that he was a thinker of the third century. On most of the questions of criticism that occupy the minds of theologians to-day Origen is silent, or he is of no service because of his fantastic exegesis, his external conception of prophecy, his esoteric theory of Scripture. But on those characteristics of the Christian faith which are independent of all critical theories,—the internal testimony, the witness of history, the moral force of Christianity as incarnated in Christian men and women,—few writers of any age have spoken with

[1] i. 37.

more suggestiveness than he. His comprehensive grasp of Christianity in itself, in its historical relations, and as a system of thought and life, is in some respects the most valuable part of his apology. He does not use the word, but if we may put his principles into modern phraseology, we would say that he regards Christianity as the absolute religion.

Of this absoluteness one essential mark is universality. Origen never ceases to insist on this feature, and to point out its continuous realisation.[1] That all men of every nationality, that all classes of men differing in race, in rank, in culture, in intellectual and moral characteristics, could ever be united by a common bond of religious belief, was to Celsus an utterly impossible conception:[2] a strong undercurrent of impatience at such an idea runs through a great part of his polemic; and in this respect, as in most, he was an exponent of the thought of his age. To him, at least, the existence of a universal empire did not suggest the possibility of a universal religion: the crowding of the Pantheon gave no hint of it, for all the gods were placed there on a footing of equality, and every addition to the number brought no nearer the thought of universalism, for it was only the addition of another for whom no exclusive sovereignty was claimed: the conception of a universal religion, which was at the same time a universal ethic, was

[1] v. 62; ii. 13; i. 11; vi. 11; vii. 41, &c. [2] viii. 72.

absolutely new, and could only arise when worship was held to be independent of ritual; when the belief in one supreme God was accompanied by the belief in man's relation to Him, and in the possibility of his fellowship with Him.

As the absolute religion, Christianity is the "heir of all the ages,"—of all the past, of all its thought, its blind groping, its unconscious preparation. Hellenism as well as Judaism was a preliminary discipline for Christianity.[1] Christ, whether consciously acknowledged or not, was "the Light that lighteneth every man that cometh into the world;" and all truth, of the future as well as of the past, is His. Christianity is not novel in the sense of being unrelated to other truth; between it and all truth there is the closest interrelation. This was a leading thought with Origen, and in the interests of his apologetic a fruitful principle. It enabled him to claim originality for Christianity without putting forth the unnatural and impossible claim of absolute novelty; to acknowledge the affinity of all other truths, while maintaining for Christianity uniqueness and finality; to recognise in the unfulfilled dreams of heathenism an unconscious prophecy of Christianity. It enabled him to claim all thought as Christian; to admit in the intellectual sphere that co-operation which he did not admit in civic life. It enabled him—in some

[1] iii. 58; iv. 83.

respects the most valuable lesson of all — to meet other systems half-way; to meet on the common ground of practical morals those who refused to meet him on the ground of supernaturalism.[1] So long as it was moral in its aim and issue, all truth was to be recognised: half-truths were to be regarded as truth, not as errors, unless when they were represented as the whole truth. Christianity, according to the conception of Origen, might say, "I am of God: nothing divine is alien to me."

As the absolute religion, Christianity is in harmony with the demands of the reason and heart of man, satisfies all his aspirations, makes provision for every side of human nature, and claims to control it. Christianity comes to a soil prepared for it. Between the soul of man and Christian truth there is a natural affinity: it never clings to error wilfully, but in blind passion, because it invests error with the beauty of truth: on the presentation of Christianity it at once recognises its true kindred.[2] In this natural relationship between man and Christianity are to be found the possibility of its becoming universal, and the secret of its permanence.

Christianity is absolute in idea, and therefore final. The goal of all religion, whether consciously or unconsciously defined, is to bring man into union with God. Christianity fulfils this end by its ideal of

[1] viii. 52. [2] iii. 40.

worship,—by bringing man into fellowship with no impotent demon, no impersonal fate, but with "the God over all." It fulfils this desire for union not only in idea but in the sphere of history. By the incarnation the essential affinity of the divine and the human is manifested, for the incarnation of God in Christ is a real incarnation. It fulfils all the dreams of an incarnation—all the yearnings that found expression in the glorification of men into gods, or in the legends about the descent of gods among men. It brings the doctrine of the incarnation into harmony with the ethical life of man by presenting to all men the possibility of a moral incarnation.

From what has been said it will be manifest that for the truth of revelation generally, as of Christianity in particular, Origen attaches most importance to the internal evidence. The ultimate ground of revelation is the philanthropy of God; its aim is the moral salvation of mankind.[1] All revelation, including the manifestation of God in Christ, is an act of divine condescension to the needs and capacities of men: it is a putting of the treasure in earthen vessels, a manifestation of the supernatural within the boundaries of the natural, a limitation of the truth revealed by a material embodiment. To be consistent, Origen should have recognised in the written word a *kenosis* similar to that which he clearly acknowledged in the incarnate

[1] vii. 41; iv. 19.

Word. But here, as elsewhere in Origen, we see the coexistence of contradictory principles, or rather of principles the one of which would have been rendered superfluous by the logical development of the other. By his theory, for example, of the universal activity of the Logos, he had a principle which fully explained in a manner consistent with the unique claims of revelation the parallels and analogies in Greek philosophy and religion to the Christian Scriptures; but he supplemented it by the theory that some of the parallels were due to demonic agency, which thus sought by anticipation to throw discredit on Christianity.[1] His theory of demonic influence was never brought into relation to his view of ethnic inspiration. So was it with his conception of the Scriptures. In his view of the self-limitation of God in His Word, he had a grasp of the principle of development which would have accounted for all that was perplexing in a revelation of divine truth to men: for had he followed out his own principle, he would have seen that God spoke to men "as they were able to hear it"; that He was limited not only by the capacities of men in general, but by the age and characteristics of the particular nation or men to whom His truth was communicated; but he was prevented by his allegorical bias from giving due force to this thought. It is idle, however, to regret this, as, whether Origen adopted the esoteric

[1] viii. 4; vii. 30. Cf. vi. 9.

theory from apologetic motives, or, as is more probable, found in its apologetic value a strong argument for the necessity and truth of the theory, Scripture would not have been to Origen what it was but for his mystic interpretation of it.[1]

While revelation was thus due to the love of God for man, it was the love of a holy God, and accordingly morality was necessarily associated with philanthropy. To this end everything was made subservient. The prophets of the Jews were worthy to be inspired because of their moral beauty and strength.[2] The test of their inspiration is the measure of the reformation which was created by the truth which they spoke: the perfect ambassador of truth is he who produces a complete reformation.[3] The inspiration of words which urged men to forsake sin is the same as the inspiration of words in which the future was foretold.[4] And as morality was a prerequisite in the persons who were inspired, and the touchstone of the words for which inspiration was claimed, so was moral purity essential for their interpretation.[5]

It is only when we turn to his defence of Christ and Christianity that we see of how supreme importance in the eyes of Origen was the moral argument. To him the great problem of Christianity, as well as

[1] "Without it, he himself would have been a sceptic."—Hatch's Hibbert Lecture, p. 77.

[2] vii. 7. [3] iv. 4. [4] vii. 10. [5] vii. 30.

its chief apology, was Christ Himself. He does not ignore the value of the evidence of miracle and prophecy; but he is conscious of the limitations of the argument from the miraculous, and with a true instinct he fixes on that aspect which is of most abiding force in the argument from prophecy. The miracles wrought by Christ as an attestation by God of Him and His teaching were natural elements in a supernatural mission: by the moral test they were easily discriminated from the physical marvels of heathenism. But the greatest miracle was the spiritual transformation which was produced by His Gospel in the hearts and lives of men, to the reality of which every day added its increase of testimony. From the supernatural results of Christianity, as revealed in this moral revolution which attended its progress, he argued for the divine origin of the Founder who created a force so constant and invariable in its working, which showed no symptom of exhaustion but was daily growing in strength, which was not diminished by being shared, which owed nothing to the agencies by which it was transmitted, which gave vitality to moral truths that had been lying dormant and inoperative, and which in the two centuries that had elapsed had proved its universal adaptiveness. With supernatural foresight Christ had predicted both the intensity of this force and the method of its operation, the obstacles with which it would meet, and its

victorious advance. The progress of the Gospel was thus a continuous attestation of the prophecy. Christ is exhibited by Origen as a spiritual physician who possessed a radical cure for the moral maladies of men, and as the Founder of a kingdom which was destined to embrace all mankind under its sovereignty. Humanity had already acknowledged, and was every day vindicating, His claims. And, as a consequence, the Christian life was the best apology. This was the test of Christ Himself. Apologetics had for its sure foundation Christian ethics. To lives which were clearly supernatural in their aspirations and aims, which were reproductions of a divine archetype, which like a temple revealed the beauty of the divine ideal, which were originated and maintained by Him and would find completion only in Him, Christ left the defence of Himself and His truth.

The apology of Origen contains the germs of many principles which subsequent apologists have developed. That Christianity, in respect of its fundamental problems, presents no greater difficulty than theism, while it gives a solution which to mere theism is impossible; that faith is not a principle limited to the sphere of Christianity, but of universal application; that Christianity is to be judged by its ideals, especially by its ideal of eternal life,—may be quoted by way of illustration.[1] One principle which has not generally received

[1] iii. 35; iv. 3; vi. 57; i. 11; iii. 81.

the same recognition from an apologetic point of view is his interpretation of the meaning of heresy or division in the Church. His insight into its historical source was sound,—not less sound into its function. Absolute uniformity of opinion never existed in the Church: if it did, it would be the death of religion,—an evidence rather that it was dead, and of no living interest to men. Heresy is a strong testimony that spiritual ailments are as real as physical evils; that the problems of religion call for solution as imperatively as the problems of ethics and philosophy. That which creates no antagonism creates no enthusiasm: criticism of the truth is a higher tribute than passive acquiescence in it; the history of heresy an invaluable aid to the study of the development of Christian doctrine. The dream of a united Church, of a vast body of men marching under the same banner for the conquest of evil, with discipline perfect, with ranks unbroken, armed from age to age with the same weapons, ever repeating the same watchwords with monotonous accent, is a dream which has always exercised a natural fascination for men, but it is a fascination which disappears before the cold light of history. Much truer is the conception which underlies the illustration of Origen, that absolute oneness in Christian belief can only exist where the souls of men are asleep or dying; that to each section of the Church, to each interpreter, has been given the elucidation of some aspects of truth

which others had ignored or forgotten; and that the evil lies not so much in the division itself as in attaching exaggerated emphasis to the importance of some little dividing-line; that

> "God reveals Himself in many ways,
> Lest one good custom should corrupt the world."

Celsus has done a signal service to the history of the Church by showing how Christianity appeared to the eyes of an outsider; but he has done much more. He was an outsider who had a philosophy of polytheism which he exhibited as superior to Christianity; for while it satisfied the demands of reason by acknowledging the unity of God, it did not openly break with the religious beliefs and ceremonies of the people. The teaching of Celsus is virtually presented by him as a rival system of religion and morals, and Origen accepts the challenge. At the close of his reply, Origen leaves it to the reader to decide whether his work or that of Celsus breathes more of the spirit of the true God, and is more animated by that truth which by sound doctrines stimulates men to the highest life.[1] Both Celsus and Origen recognised a certain affinity of ideas; once or twice the question at issue between them seems to narrow almost to a vanishing-point; but the resemblance is more apparent than real. There are passages

[1] viii. 76.

which seem to show, as Harnack says,[1] that the Christian teaching concerning the Son of God might very easily have been made acceptable to the educated heathen by means of the doctrine of the Logos; but the very passage quoted plainly indicates that the distinctively Christian dogma of the Word "becoming flesh" was utterly repugnant to all Hellenic ways of thinking. Detached thoughts in each writer might be transferred to the other; but in regard to their conceptions of God, the universe, and man, Celsus and Origen stand in fundamental antagonism. If Celsus were a true interpreter of Hellenism—and his relation alike to his precursors and his successors marks him out as a representative man — the possibility of a meeting-point between Hellenism and Christianity, or of an assimilation of the one by the other, was almost unthinkable.

The theological watchword of Hellenism was the much-quoted saying of Plato, "To find out the Maker and Father of the universe is a hard task, and when we have found Him it is impossible to speak of His nature to all."[2] The supreme God of Celsus is hidden and inaccessible; the God of Christianity is self-revealing and accessible. It might be possible for a philosopher to rise to the lofty uplands where God

[1] ii. 31. Harnack, Dogmengeschichte, vol. i. p. 609.

[2] Timæus, 28 C. Cf. Justin, Cohort., c. 38 (37 B); 2 Apol., c. 10 (48 E); Clement, Cohort., c. 6, s. 68; Cyril con. Julian., i. 30 D.

dwells, break in on the solitary grandeur of the Eternal, and catch up some fragment of truth, but he could not bring back to his fellows the fruit of his toil; it remained a solitary possession, which he could not impart to others. But man's interest in God is conditioned by His power and His will to manifest Himself. If He cannot or will not unveil Himself, He is, so far as man is concerned, non-existent, at least impersonal and non-moral. The unknown Christian teachers whose doctrine is quoted by Celsus had a clear perception of this principle.[1] They saw that to deny to God the attribute of self-manifestation was to destroy His moral relationship to man; that God cannot but unveil Himself; and that the incarnation, as a revelation of God—the highest it was possible for man to receive, and in the form best adapted to the capacities of man—was a necessity. Christianity called on men to put their faith in a God who visited the human race, and exercised a providence over every individual;[2] Hellenism could admit neither position, as it was more concerned about the dignity than the goodness of God.

Not less antagonistic were their views of God's relation to the universe and to man. The God of Hellenism was transcendent but not immanent; the God of Christianity is transcendent and immanent. Holding by a dualistic theory, Celsus taught that the

[1] vi. 69. [2] v. 3.

seeming evil in the universe was due to matter, and therefore independent of God: he had no solution for the moral disorder in the world, because he ignored the individual character of that disorder. In this Hellenism was consistent with itself: individualism in every form was the great stumbling-block. "Man as man was nothing in antiquity; the State was everything." Religion was a national concern, and only related to the individual as one of a nation. Christianity, by its conception of man as a spiritual being capable of direct fellowship with God, created or gave a new prominence to the thought of individual rights and duties; and at the same time gave unity to the moral life, by bringing into harmony the religious and moral spheres, which in Hellenism stood apart and unrelated. Origen might well challenge a comparison between Hellenism and Christianity; for he saw everywhere around him that the Christian ideal of life, however imperfectly realised, carried with it an intensity and universality of moral influence which was altogether unparalleled. In brief, Hellenism offered to the soul thirsting after God, a hidden God, who therefore could have no claim upon man, and no interest in him; for an explanation of the mystery in the universe, a theory which could only issue in moral paralysis, for it said that no explanation was possible; for an ethical standard, a fluctuating law, whose authority was external, and which could take no

cognisance of the inner spring of human actions; for the unquenchable hope of immortality, a denial or a mocking shadow. Christianity, on the contrary, as set forth by Origen, presented to man a revealing and revealed God, whose essence was love, and whose love had been eternally operative; for an explanation of the universe, the assurance that there was advance even in seeming retrogression, and that evil would finally be overthrown; for its moral ideal, the pattern of a divine life lived under human limitations, and therefore within the reach of all; for the hope of immortality, the certainty of its attainment under conditions which implied the eternal progress of the intellectual and moral nature of man.

A striking light is cast on the fundamental principles of the Hellenism represented by Celsus by the apologies which paganism put forth, when, more than two centuries after, it in turn had to plead for toleration. Nothing reveals so plainly its own hopeless decadence, as well as the radical contrast between it and Christianity. It had learned nothing and forgotten nothing. The dying paganism was defended in the West by Symmachus, the patriotic representative of national religions; in the East by Libanius, an exponent of philosophical polytheism. In 384 Symmachus, the Prefect of Rome, presented, in name of the Senate, a petition to Valentinian praying that the altar of Victory might be restored

to the senate-house. With something of the impatience of a statesman for the discussions of cultivated leisure, he repeats the theory of the one God being worshipped under many forms;[1] his real ground is the old view of gods of nations and gods of cities who were assigned to each by the divine mind.[2] The strongest point in his own eyes is the appeal to tradition: he makes Rome herself plead for reverence to her age,—for the use of the ancestral rites by the ministry of which she had subdued the world.[3] He makes one fatal concession. If Victory, he pleads, is denied the honour of a god, let honour at least be paid to the name.[4] When a passionate worshipper of the ancestral religions was willing to plead that his god might be tolerated as a metaphor, his defence could only hasten its downfall. The apology of Libanius, which was addressed to Theodosius a few years later,[5] is in some respects feebler than the appeal of Symmachus. Like Celsus, the tutor of Julian speaks with the scorn of one on a higher platform of men "who have left the fire-tongs, the hammer, and the anvil, and arrogantly discourse about heaven

[1] "Æquum est, quicquid omnes colunt, unum putari. . . . Sed otiosorum disputatio est hæc."—Relationes, iii. c. 10, edit. Meyer.

[2] "Varios custodes urbibus cultus mens divina distribuit."—Idem, c. 8.

[3] "Utar cerimoniis avitis."—Idem, c. 9.

[4] "Reddatur saltem nomini honor, qui numini denegatus est."—Idem, c. 3.

[5] Between 388 and 391—Sievers, Das Leben des Libanius, p. 192.

and those who dwell in it."[1] He prays that the temple should not be destroyed on the ground that the gods worshipped therein had been useful to Rome, even the source of its power, and avers that to destroy the temples would be to destroy the very soul of the country.[2] His chief plea is unconsciously a condemnation of Hellenism. It is, that the law had not explicitly ordered the destruction of the temples; had the king enjoined it, the destroyers of the temples would have done no wrong; no one was so audacious as to claim to be superior to the law.[3] The difference between this abject surrender to the will of the State and the clear declaration of Origen for the supremacy of the divine law above all human enactments is the measure of the difference between Hellenism and Christianity, between a religion which was only national and one which was truly individual, between a philosophical theory and a spiritual faith. Christianity was influenced by Hellenic ideas both directly and indirectly; but Hellenism was to the very end unconscious of any relationship, and continued to repeat its exploded watchwords as if Christianity had never existed. The theology of Libanius is not one step in advance of that of Celsus. And

[1] Libanius, Ὑπὲρ τῶν ἱερῶν—Reiske, vol. ii. pp. 179, 180.

[2] Idem, vol. ii. p. 167—τούτῳ τετύφλωταί τε καὶ κεῖται καὶ τέθνηκε ψυχὴ.

[3] Idem, vol. ii. pp. 163, 172, 174, 176. οὐκοῦν οἱ καθαιροῦντες οὐκ ἠδίκουν τῷ τὰ δοκοῦντα τῷ βασιλεῖ ποιεῖν—vol. ii. p. 201.

this was necessarily the case. Neither in its popular form nor as interpreted by philosophy did paganism contain any principle of development. As held by the populace, its development was a contradiction in terms, for its strongest argument was the appeal to the past. Its interpretation by philosophy was futile, like all unreal compromises, and killed the religion which it professed to save; for the one God of the philosophers was never really brought into relation to the inferior deities of the many. As if its only chance of survival was the absolute isolation of its own ideas, to the last Hellenism regarded the Christian conceptions as utterly alien: having no principle of life, it lacked the power to assimilate; while by its concessions to the popular religions it destroyed its own coherence. Christianity claimed to be at once a philosophy for the few and a saving faith for the many, and in both forms equally divine and authoritative:[1] it took captive Hellenic culture, and transformed it from an enemy into a servant; for, like a living organism, it had power to assimilate all that was akin to itself without being faithless to the law of its own inner development.

[1] Cf. Harnack, Dogmengeschichte, vol. i. p. 567.

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